Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival



@dnwritersfest

Introduction

Kia ora e te iwi,

We are so excited to present our exceptional 2023 programme. This year, we have curated a selection of literary experiences based on a central theme: Te $P\bar{u}ao$ – the place where the river meets the sea.

We all know the beauty of river mouths, where the restless river runs into the welcoming ocean. Te awa $\bar{O}t\bar{a}kou$ itself is an ocean river – a strong current that moves within the wider body of water that forms the Otago Harbour. Our Festival will move as a current, bringing ideas in and sending others on a voyage beyond.

For the first time, we have worked with Curators Māori and we are honoured to consider our world through a bicultural lens. Ngā mihi nunui ki a kōrua!

In the spirit of celebration, this year we're delighted to recognise literary contributions from writing icons: Witi Ihimaera, who celebrates 50 years as a published author, and Katherine Mansfield, born on 14 October in 1888. Their work is part of a remarkable stream of renowned authors and emerging talents, reflecting the beautiful confluence of voices, genres and themes that define our ever-evolving world.

With heartfelt gratitude, we extend our sincere thanks to our funders, partners, staff, Board members, and the talented writers and readers who have made the Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival possible.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the wonder of literature, connect with like-minded individuals, and revel in the power of words to inspire, provoke and unite.

Dive in and enjoy! Hei ākuanei!

Nicola McConnell

Chair, Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival Board



Top Row: Kitty Brown, Jeanette Wikaira, Nicola McConnell, Nicola Cummins, Anna Hoek-Sims, Philippa Murrell Bottom Row: Linda Geddes, Amanda Burke, Meg Hamilton, Mary McLaughlin Insert: Jen Stokes



Toitū Tauraka Waka – Inaugural Curator Māori Series Jacinta Ruru (Raukawa, Ngāti Ranginui) and Angela Wanhalla (Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki, Ngāi Tahu)

The Toitū Tauraka Waka was one of several Kāti Mamoe-Kāi Tahu landing places in the Otago harbour. Situated beside the Toitū Creek as it emptied into the harbour, the tauraka waka site provided a softly sloped beach for landing waka with a good point of entry to the surrounding bush, fresh water and mahika kai.

For this series, which borrows its name from this important local waka site, we are excited to bring Māori writers and creatives to a welcoming landing place to connect with readers in ways that celebrate our mātauranga, wairua and tino rangatiratanga. In sharing stories that matter to us, our ancestors and our mokopuna, Māori writers help make sense of the past, create narratives for our future, and provide inspiration for the generations to come.



Deep River Talk – Poetry Series Presented by the Hone Tuwhare Trust

In a uniquely Dunedin form, the Hone Tuwhare Trust draws its korowai around big topics like activism, poetry and politics through a finely curated series of events. Hone Tuwhare was a poet of the people – an activist, storyteller and commentator on the political, cultural and environmental landscape of Aotearoa. Tuwhare has left us a legacy of words filled with passion and dreams that continue to inspire, challenge and bring us joy, hope and mauri ora for all.

Kā Mihi

Grateful thanks to our wonderful board, staff, curators, volunteers and supporters. Your creativity, enthusiasm and energy are essential to the success of the festival.

Board Chair: Nicola McConnell

Festival Trustees:

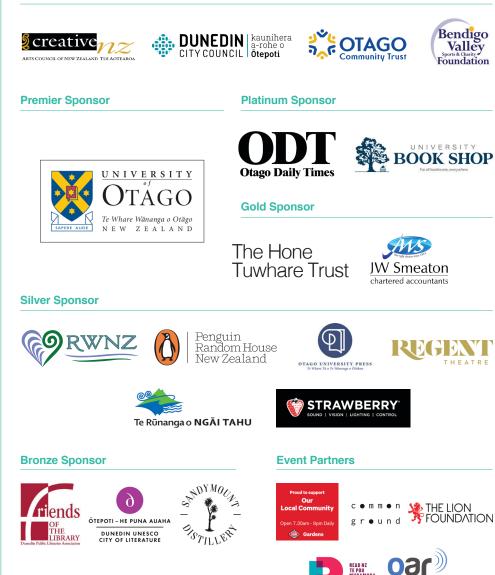
Amanda BurkeNicola CumminsMeg HamiltonAnna Hoek-SimsMary McLaughlinJeanette Wikaira

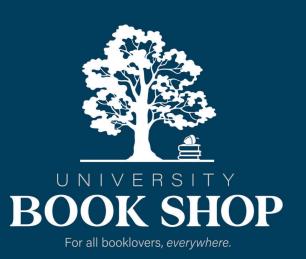
Festival Director: Kitty Brown Associate Festival Director: Jen Stokes Art Director: Daniel Alexander Administration & Communication Coordinator: Linda Geddes Festival Grant Manager: Philippa Murrell

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Saturdav 14 October

Festival Programme 2023

Friday 13 October



Te Pūao: The Place Where the River Meets the Sea Mātauraka Māori, pūrākau and telling Māori stories for the future

Witi Ihimaera, Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Monty Soutar in conversation with Megan Potiki.

Ōtākou Marae Fri 12.30pm \$25/\$20 (limited numbers)

Ōtākou Marae stands sentinel near the entrance to the harbour, overlooking the place where Te Awa Ōtākou (the river) meets Te moana nui-a-kiwa (the sea). We begin the festival here, where mātauraka, stories and creativity have flourished for hundreds of years.



Fri 7pm

\$35/\$25

Festival Gala Night Te Pō Whakanui i Witi Ihimaera! Celebrating 50 years of literary inspiration and influence Presented by University of Otago

Welcome, welcome! Join Stacey Morrison for a grand evening celebrating beloved author Witi Ihimaera. A bevy of writers, poets and musicians will reflect on Witi's influence on their work and the written The Regent Theatre landscape of Aotearoa. A night to remember.

> Featuring writers: Witi Ihimaera, Emma Espiner, Chris Tse, Fiona Farrell, David Eggleton, Jacinta Ruru, Angela Wanhalla and musicians Kiringāua Cassidy, Ariana Tikao, Ruby Solly and The Dunedin Quartet.

Tickets available at The Regent Theatre Box Office and online at www.regenttheatre.co.nz



Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium Sat 9.30am \$25/\$20

Unravelling the Past: Researching and Writing About History in Aotearoa Presented by **ODT**

In this thought-provoking discussion between Paddy Richardson, Paul Diamond and Chair Rob Kidd, find out how research plays a vital role in unravelling mysteries, uncovering hidden narratives, and shedding light on historical events - sometimes with a criminal twist.



There's a Cure for This - Emma Espiner

"I don't know why medicine felt like coming home but, for some reason, it fits. I keep thinking about how the tohu, once awarded, can never be taken back. There are few things in life that emphatic. Better not fuck it up."

Te Whare o Rukutia Sat 9.30am \$25/\$20

From award-winning writer Dr Emma Espiner comes this striking and profound debut memoir.

Don't miss this sparkling conversation traversing books, writing, health, life and te ao hurihuri with Dr Emma Espiner and Stacey Morrison.



Untangling Hearts: Navigating the Complexities of Romantic Fiction

Nicky Pellegrino and Jayne Castel share their experiences and insights navigating the complexities of writing romantic fiction. They'll talk about everything from addressing stereotypes and clichés to developing believable and multi-dimensional characters.

Community Gallery Sat 9.30am \$25/\$20

They will discuss the prejudices and misconceptions that can surround romantic fiction, and talk about ways to elevate the genre to a place of recognition and respect within the literary world.



Needs Adult Supervision – Emily Writes

Ever thought "I wish there was an adult around", then realised you're it? Laugh, gain some wisdom and possibly shed a tear, all in one hour with the best-selling author of Rants in the Dark, Emily Writes, and local comedian Harriet Moir.

Dunedin Public Art Gallerv Auditorium Sat 11am \$25/\$20

Saturday 14 October



Ora: Healing Ourselves - Indigenous Knowledge, Healing and Wellbeing

Ora is an exciting new collection that explores Indigenous understandings and practices of wellbeing and healing from trauma, grounded in the knowledge of ancestors and based on research.

Te Whare o Rukutia Sat 11am FREE

Join editors Leonie Pihama and Linda Tuhiwai Smith as they discuss tikanga Māori concepts, decolonising approaches and prioritising mauri ora.



Dreams With Teeth: Control and Colonisation in Science Fiction and Fantasy

What happens when technology is levied against those we fear, or those we refuse to understand? Prepare to venture into uncharted territories as Sascha Stronach and Pip Adam, along with Chair David Large, gather for a thrilling panel discussion that delves into the captivating realms of memory, resistance, humanism and resurrection.

Community Gallery Sat 11am \$25/\$20



Dunedin Public Art

Sat 12.30pm

\$25/\$20

Narrative Warfare: What Happens When Great Stories Go to Work for Nefarious Purposes Presented by **ODT**

We all know people captivated by conspiracy stories - but are we talking enough about the darker origins of these stories? How much do we really know?

Gallery Auditorium Matthew Cunningham and Sanjana Hattotuwa get together with chair Ian Telfer to help us unpack how stories aid the social and cultural intolerances that have shaped and continue to shape Aotearoa society.



Mokorua: A Personal Journey Towards Moko Kauae – Ariana Tikao

"It is said, 'take your moko as a friend for life', likewise, we witness the emergence of this pair of lifelong companions."

Te Whare o Rukutia Sat 12.30pm \$25/\$20

Mokorua is Ariana Tikao's powerful and personal story of receiving her moko kauae. The story is interwoven with the revival of language, tikanga and identity among Kāi Tahu whānau over the last thirty years. Moana Wesley will sit down with Ariana for a tender exploration of this generous work through words and images.

- Hinemoa Elder



Community Gallery Sat 12.30pm \$25/\$20



Bite Back: The Transformative Healing Power of Storytelling Presented by University of Otago

The characters in the *The Deck* face a pandemic and the total collapse

Dive into this luminous novel as the author, local legend Fiona Farrell,

Genevieve Mora's story is one of hope - it was with the power of stories that she was able to overcome and navigate some of the hardest years of her life. *Bite Back* is her gift of practical advice and compassionate guidance to others who are going through similar things.

Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium Sat 2pm \$25/\$20

Along with Nicky Pellegrino, Genevieve will talk about how stories can provide a powerful platform for self-expression, education and dismantling the stigmas often associated with eating disorders and mental illness.



From Jewelled Fantasies to Splendid Rags: **Reflecting on Kākā Point** Presented by the Hone Tuwhare Trust

Telling Stories at the Edge – Fiona Farrell

of civilisation. To what do they turn? The power of story.

Presented by J W Smeatons

shares stories with Lvnn Freeman.

Take an imaginative visit to Hone Tuwhare's crib at Kākā Point. conjured by the reflections and responses of poets, artists and the newly established Tuwhare Creative Residency.

Te Whare o Rukutia Sat 2pm FREE

With your guides Jeanette Wikaira, Manaia Tuwhare, Tame Iti, Tracey Tawhiao, Ati Teepa and Cilla McQueen.



Dunedin Public Art

Gallery Auditorium

Sat 3.30pm

\$25/\$20

Fierce Hope: The Ihumātao Chapter Presented by University of Otago

Youth activism has been a defining feature of Aotearoa's recent political landscape. In these unsettling times, the political actions of young New Zealanders are a source of inspiration, challenge and renewal.

Ihumātao activist Qiane Matata-Sipu is joined by author Karen Nairn to share stories and insights from the frontline.

Saturday 14 October



Nourishing Minds: Exploring the Link Between Food and Mental Health

Embark on a fascinating journey into the intricate connection between food, gut health and mental wellbeing with Dr Alby Hailes, Liv Sisson and Helen Lehndorf. Along with Chair Mei Peng, unravel the complex ways that the foods we consume can influence our mood, cognition and emotional balance.

Te Whare o Rukutia Sat 3.30pm \$25/\$20

Radiant Revelry – Celebrating Katherine Mansfield's Timeless Legacy Presented by Otago University Press

"She decided not to turn up to her own party / sneaking out instead to light sparklers / and swim naked in the cold sea"

The Athenaeum Library Sat 3.30pm \$20/\$15

 – Nina Mingya Powles-from her poem If Katherine Mansfield were my Best Friend

On her birthday, and to commemorate the centenary year of her death, we celebrate the life and work of Katherine Mansfield, New Zealand's iconic, boundary-pushing literary giant.

Get ready for an afternoon of sensory delight, in the cosy heritage surroundings of the Athenaeum Library. We will be transported back in time by a cello and violin duo performing the classical music that Mansfield loved.

We'll then move to a fascinating and in-depth conversation between chair Michelle Elvy and Katherine Mansfield biographer Redmer Yska – author of *Katherine Mansfield's Europe: Station to Station*.

To be followed by a gorgeous afternoon tea of inspired cupcakes by massive Mansfield fan, Dunedin cake artist Alby Hailes, at which the winners of the inaugural At the Bay I I te Kokoru story awards will be announced by Emma Neale.



WOOF! Sat 4.30pm FREE Soapbox Political Poetry at WOOF! Presented by the Hone Tuwhare Trust

Come early for the poetry, stay late for the politics. Hone Tuwhare's poems punched above their weight in politics. He also loved pubs! On election day, we honour these passions atop a grassroots soapbox.

Featuring poets: David Eggleton, Ati Teepa, Chris Tse, Ruby Solly, Coco Solid, Jessica Hinerangi and Michaela Keeble.



Dunedin City Library Sat 11.30am-2.30pm FREE

Pakiwaitara: Children's Storytime Sessions Presented by Dunedin UNESCO City of Literature

In this series of engaging activities hosted by hilarious local author Swapna Haddow young authors and artists can explore the creative power of writing and illustrating. Whether your child is an avid reader or just beginning their literary journey, these sessions promise to create cherished memories and nurture a lifelong love for books and storytelling.



11.30am Susan Wardell – The Lighthouse Princess

Susan Wardell will share her luminous story The Lighthouse Princess and lead interactive exercises using the body, senses and heart to draw on experience for the telling of creative and magical stories.



Ruth Paul – Lion Guards the Cake, I am Jellyfish

Author & illustrator Ruth Paul will invite the audience to participate in some riotous story play and share her creative process through live illustrated storytelling.



Michaela Keeble and Tokerau Brown – Paku Manu Ariki Whakatakapōkai

You'll love this debut children's book and the creative team who made it. Michaela Keeble and Tokerau Brown will invite caregivers and kids to create a funny story together on the things that cause clashes and controversies in our worlds.

Sunday 15 October



Kāwai: For Such a Time As This - Monty Soutar

Strong intuition and a fair-sized gamble led Monty Soutar to leave his job, sell his house and switch from a lifetime of historic scholarship and writing to focus squarely on creating a novel. That leap of faith led to his best-selling historic adventure epic, Kāwai, which has captivated audiences since its release. There are few writers skilled and brave enough to tell pre-colonial stories of Aotearoa. Hear the story of Kāwai and Monty Soutar as he tells it to Kāi Tahu historian Ross Calman.

Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium Sun 10am \$25/\$20



Strong Words: Infinite Glimpses of Human Truth Presented by Otago University Press

Virginia Woolf famously said essays were the art that can "sting us wide awake".

Te Whare o Rukutia Sun 10am \$25/\$20

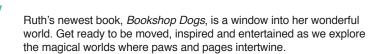
The essay's aim is to inform, persuade or provoke thoughtful reflection in the reader, with authors often baring all on the page. Sit down with Landfall editor Lynley Edmeades in conversation with Shu-Ling Chua. Michaela Keeble and Susan Wardell as they explore the intricacies and perils of essay writing.



Bookshop Dogs – Ruth Shaw

Dogs of all shapes and sizes visit Ruth Shaw's three wee bookshops in Manapouri. In this special session, join Ruth and Lynn Freeman for a conversation about the bond between humans and canines and how these beloved four-legged friends have inspired and enriched the world of literature.

Community Gallery Sun 10am \$25/\$20





Dunedin Public Art

Sun 11.30am

\$25/\$20

Wild Sustenance: Fungi & Food Foraging

Discover the hidden wonders of nature's pantry with seasoned forager Helen Lehndorf and sellout author of Fungi of Actearoa Liv Sisson.

With Nicky Pellegrino at the helm, the forest becomes your grocery store and nature your cookbook.

Gallery Auditorium Be inspired by the wonders of foraging in a gathering that celebrates the beauty and sustenance found in the wilderness around us.



Te Whare o Rukutia Sun 11.30am FREE

Euchred and Eclipsed: A Birthday Celebration for the Poet Laureate Presented by the Hone Tuwhare Trust

It's the Poet Laureate, Chris Tse's birthday! Help us celebrate on this auspicious occasion! Our gift to Chris? New poetry from brilliant Dunedin poets. Join our host Liz Breslin as we raise our glasses and toast to another year around the sun with vivid, spoken words.

Featuring poets: Chris Tse, Jessica Hinerangi, David Eggleton, Sophia Wilson, Megan Kitching, Louise Wallace and Rushi Vyas.



Beyond Words: Storytelling That Transcends Boundaries

Join Stacey Kokaua as she sits down with powerhouse creatives Coco Solid and Qiane Matata-Sipu to explore story-telling through diverse mediums. From podcasts, film, music, visual arts and more, discover how storytelling transcends boundaries and adapts to the ever-changing landscape of artistic expression.

Community Gallery Sun 11.30am \$25/\$20



Indigenous Mark Makers

Indigenous storytellers uphold ways of knowing that reach back before the advent of the written word. Delve into the craft of these contemporary mark makers with Ariana Tikao, Ruby Solly, Cora-Allan and the Māori Mermaid, Jessica Hinerangi.

Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium Sun 1pm FREE



Brushstrokes on Pages: The Intersection of Art and Fiction

Immerse yourself in a world of art and history, where brushstrokes and masterpieces come alive in the written word. Lynn Freeman welcomes home Andrea Hotere and Susan Paterson to discuss their debut novels, which take us over the seas and into eras long past.

Community Gallery Sun 1pm \$25/\$20

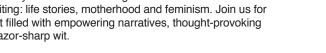
Sunday 15 October



Laughter and Rants From the Dark: A Conversation With Barbara Else and Emily Writes

Barbara Else and Emily Writes take the stage to celebrate the common threads in their writing: life stories, motherhood and feminism. Join us for an engaging event filled with empowering narratives, thought-provoking discussions and razor-sharp wit.

Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium Sun 2.30pm \$25/\$20



Author and session chair information and bios can be found on our website:

dunedinwritersfestival.co.nz





Te Awa o Kupu: The Irrepressible River of Words flowing from Māori Writers

Witi Ihimaera and editors Kiri Piahana-Wong and Vaughan Rapatahana join Paul Diamond to hold this vibrant space for Māori writers as we navigate the power of the word, from colonisation to identity, from creativity to matauranga Maori. Accept the challenge of the wero. Join the korero.

Te Whare o Rukutia Sun 2.30pm FREE

Featuring writers: Jacinta Ruru, Ruby Solly, Robert Sullivan and Ariana Tikao.



Capturing Time and Place: Exploring the Ends of the Earth

Prepare to be transported through time and across continents. Neville Peat and Bill Morris, along with chair Lynn Freeman, share their expertise and insights on the interconnectedness of landscape, history, and geography. Whether you are a seasoned naturalist or simply enamoured by the wonders of nature, let this visually captivating session immerse you in the world around us.

Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium Sun 4pm \$25/\$20





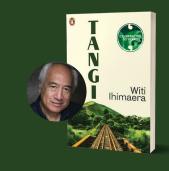
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Congratulations Witi Ihimaera on the **50th anniversary**

of the publication of Tangi!

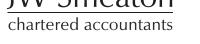
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Festival Venues

GALA:

The Regent Theatre, 17 The Octagon

PROGRAMME EVENTS:

- 2 Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium, 30 The Octagon
- 3 Te Whare o Rukutia, 20 Princes St
- 4 The Community Gallery, 26 Princes St
- KATHERINE MANSFIELD PARTY: The Athenaeum Library, 23 The Octagon
- **6** PAKIWAITARA CHILDRENS PROGRAMME: Dunedin City Library, 230 Moray Pl
- POLITICAL POETRY WOOF!, 368 Moray PI

B POLLING BOOTH:

Dunedin Municipal Chambers, 38 The Octagon



Festival Info

Festival Book Hub: Dunedin Public Art Gallery Foyer

Thanks to the University Book Shop, all book sales and signings will take place here.

Tickets

Tickets are available online at www.dunedinwritersfestival.co.nz and Door Sales will be available subject to availability.

Ticket prices include GST and booking fee.

Gala tickets are available from The Regent Theatre at the Box Office or online www.regenttheatre.co.nz

Concession price available to holders of Community Services cards, Gold cards and Students. ID required.

Free Events

Free events help make the festival more accessible to all. No tickets are required. First come, first served. It is not possible to reserve seats. Queues may form up to 20 minutes before a free event start time.

Festival Passes

Save on ticket prices! Festival Passes can be used for up to 10 sessions and can be shared with friends. Passes must be redeemed for event tickets.

Passes cannot be redeemed for Gala Night Tickets. These can only be purchased from The Regent Theatre.

Children

Children are welcome at all our events. Parental guidance is recommended – some events may contain adult themes and language. Under 12-year-olds must be accompanied by an adult. Under 18 entry to WOOF! is with an adult only. Proof of age required.

Refunds and Cancellations

Tickets cannot be refunded but are transferable; you can give your ticket to someone else if you are no longer able to attend. If an event is cancelled, full refunds will be issued.

Seating and Accessibility

Please arrive early if you have special seating requirements. Please see our website for more information.

Health and Safety

The Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival has a zero tolerance policy towards any racism, hate speech, misogyny. Disruptive audience members will be removed.

COVID-19

COVID-19 remains in our community – if you are unwell, please stay home. Masks welcome at all events.

Programme Updates

Programme information was correct at the time of printing. Please see our website for the most recent updates.

Dunedin Writers & Readers Festival Gala

Te Pō Whakanui i Witi Ihimaera! Celebrating 50 years of literary inspiration and influence!



Join Stacey Morrison, Witi Ihimaera and a bevy of writers, poets and musicians for a night to remember.

The Regent Theatre 7pm, Friday 13 October \$35/\$25

Tickets available at The Regent Theatre Box Office and online at www.regenttheatre.co.nz











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At a Glance

Friday ⁻	13th October:	2pm
12.30pm	Te Pūao: The Place Where the River Meets the Sea Ōtākou Marae	3.30p
7pm	Festival Gala Night: Te Pō Whakanui i Witi Ihimaera! The Regent Theatre	3.30p
Saturda	ay 14th October:	0.00
9.30am	Unravelling the Past: Researching and Writing About History in Actearoa Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium	3.30p
9.30am	<i>There's a Cure for This</i> – Emma Espiner Te Whare o Rukutia	4.30p
9.30am	Untangling Hearts: Navigating the Complexities of Romantic Fiction Community Gallery	Sun 10am
11am	Needs Adult Supervision – Emily Writes Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium	10am
11am	<i>Ora: Healing Ourselves</i> – Indigenous Knowledge, Healing and Wellbeing Te Whare o Rukutia	10am
11am	Dreams With Teeth: Control and Colonisation in Science Fiction and Fantasy Community Gallery	11.30a 11.30a
11.30am	<i>The Lighthouse Princess –</i> Susan Wardell Dunedin City Library, Children's Area	11.30
12pm	<i>Lion Guards the Cake, I am Jellyfish –</i> Ruth Paul Dunedin City Library, Children's Area	1pm
12.30pm	Narrative Warfare: What Happens When Great Stories Go to Work for Nefarious Purposes Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium	1pm
12.30pm	<i>Mokorua: A Personal Journey Towards Moko Kauae</i> – Ariana Tikao Te Whare o Rukutia	2.30p
12.30pm	Telling Stories at the Edge – Fiona Farrell Community Gallery	2.30p
1pm	Paku Manu Ariki Whakatakapōkai – Michaela Keeble & Tokerau Brown Dunedin City Library, Children's Area	4pm
2pm	Bite Back: The Transformative Healing Power of Storytelling Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium	4pm

2023 Timetable

From Jewelled Fantasies to Splendid Rags: Reflecting on Kākā Point Te Whare o Rukutia

- 30pm *Fierce Hope*: The Ihumātao Chapter Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium
- 30pm Nourishing Minds: Exploring the Link Between Food and Mental Health Te Whare o Rukutia
- 30pm Radiant Revelry Celebrating Katherine Mansfield's Timeless Legacy The Athenaeum Library
- 30pm Soapbox Political Poetry at WOOF! WOOF!

Sunday 15th October:

- Dam Kāwai: For Such a Time As This Monty Soutar Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium
- Dam Strong Words: Infinite Glimpses of Human Truth Te Whare o Rukutia
- Dam Bookshop Dogs Ruth Shaw Community Gallery
- .30am Wild Sustenance: Fungi & Food Foraging Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium
- .30am Euchred and Eclipsed: A Birthday Celebration for the Poet Laureate Te Whare o Rukutia
- .30am Beyond Words: Storytelling That Transcends Boundaries Community Gallery
- Indigenous Mark Makers Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium
- Brushstrokes on Pages: The Intersection of Art and Fiction Community Gallery
- 30pm Laughter and Rants From the Dark: A Conversation With Barbara Else and Emily Writes Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium
- 30pm Te Awa o Kupu: The Irrepressible River of Words flowing from Māori Writers Te Whare o Rukutia
 - Capturing Time and Place: Exploring the Ends of the Earth Dunedin Public Art Gallery Auditorium

Pakiwaitara: Children's Storytime Sessions

The river is an island

You are river. This way and that and all the way to sea two escorts shove and pull you. Two escorts in contention.

Left bank or right bank, how can you be a river without either?

Thus are U-Bends made. Thus are S-Bends made. Your direction is assured and sometimes running perfectly and quite straight.

A low bank on your left holds your laughing stitches in. On your right side skips another hushing your loud protests.

You are the river. Joy leaping down a greenstone stairway: anger cradled in a bed of stones.

You're a harbour; a lake; an island only when your banks are lock lathered arms in battle to confine you: slow release you.

Go river, go. To ocean seek your certain end. Rise again to cloud; to a mountain – to a mountain drinking from a tiny cup. Ah River

You are ocean: you are island.

– Hone Tuwhare Deep River Talk – Collected Poems 1993



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