

**BIG SKY**

READERS & WRITERS  
FESTIVAL **2016**

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**NO**  
**LIMITS**

May 20, 21 & 22  
GERALDTON



# OUR SPONSORS

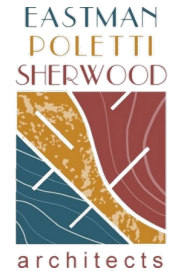
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Department of Culture and the Arts  
Department of Regional Development



writingWA...



Friends  
of the library



# INTRODUCTION

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Just as the wide open skies of our region appear to be limitless, so is the power of the imagination as we gather for the eleventh Big Sky Readers and Writers Festival, brought to you by the City of Greater Geraldton.

Everyone is welcome to take part in this special weekend which will feature ten highly talented artists who will test your limits, explore their own and challenge readers to embrace new thoughts and ideas.

Discover if there is a limit to human endurance and suffering as you listen to stories of refugees who have been forced to flee their homelands. Question the practice of forced adoptions in 1950s Australia which saw emotions stretched to the limit. Is there a limit when it comes to creating amazing artworks, poetry, stories, characters and photographs? Learn about the limits that challenged some of Australia's notable personalities in days gone by. There will be no limits to laughter if you attend the Great Debate and no limits to enjoyment when you join us at any of the social events throughout Big Sky.

So come along and immerse yourself in a weekend of ideas and connections in a warm and welcoming environment. Take your mind on a limitless journey of discovery. You will not be disappointed.

**Susan Smith**  
Big Sky Director

# BIG SKY SCHOOL DAYS

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## Thursday 19 May

### Photography workshop

1pm - 3pm

Presenter: **Daniel Craig**

Venue: *Geraldton Grammar*

School level: Years 7 - 12

### Bringing history to life

1pm - 2pm

Presenter: **Grantlee Kieza**

Venue: *Geraldton Grammar*

School level: Year 9



## Friday 20 May

### Creating artwork large and small

9am - 10:30am

Presenter: **Kyle Hughes-Odgers**

Venue: *St Lawrence's Primary School*

School level: Year 6

### Photography workshop

9am

Presenter: **Daniel Craig**

Venue: *John Willcock College*

School level: Year 9

### Conversations with refugees

9.15am - 10.15am

Presenter: **Rosemary Sayer**

Venue: *Geraldton Senior College*

School level: Years 10 - 12

### Poetry workshop

9.45am - 10.45am

Presenter: **Kevin Gillam**

Venue: *Nagle Catholic College*

School level: Year 8

### Conversations with refugees

11.50am - 12.45pm

Presenter: **Rosemary Sayer**

Venue: *Nagle Catholic College*

School level: Year 12

### Photography workshop

1pm

Presenter: **Daniel Craig**

Venue: *John Willcock College*

School level: Year 9

### Poetry workshop

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Presenter: **Kevin Gillam**

Venue: *Geraldton Senior College*

School level: Years 10 - 12

### Creating artwork large and small

1.30pm - 2.30pm

Presenter: **Kyle Hughes-Odgers**

Venue: *Mullewa District High*

School level: Various



# FRIDAY 20 MAY

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## **The art of short story writing with Susan Midalia**

**1.30pm - 4pm**

Venue: *Geraldton Regional Library*

Ticketed event: \$50

Limited numbers: please book and pay at the Library

A short story is, by definition, short, but it must strive not to be superficial. This workshop will equip you with strategies for combining economy and evocativeness, conciseness and resonance, in your writing. Using a series of writing exercises, and drawing on samples of memorable short stories, the workshop will encourage you to use language in imaginative and engaging ways. It will also consider the “bigger picture” issues of point of view, characterisation, setting and structure. Bring along your love of language and story, an openness to different ways of thinking, and a willingness – this is mandatory! – to enjoy the process.

## **Festival Opening**

**5.30pm - 7.30pm**

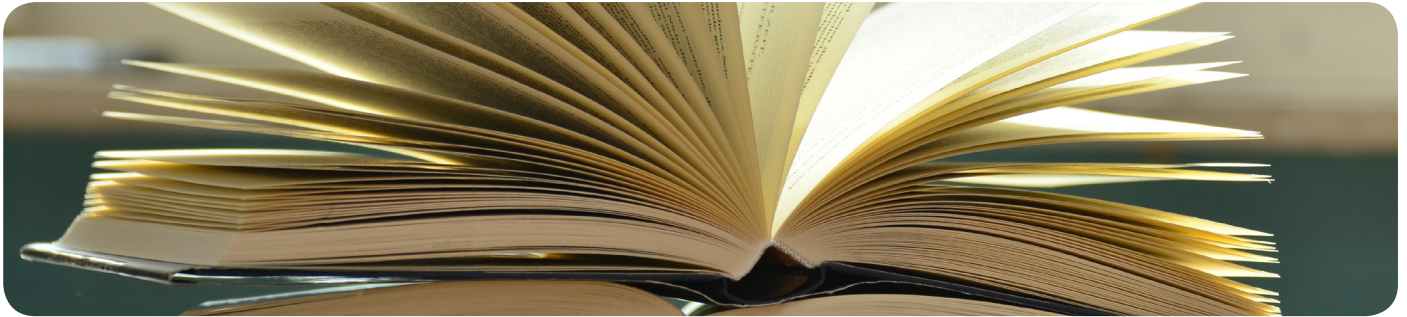
Introduction: **Susan Smith**

MC: **Grant Woodhams**

Venue: *Geraldton Regional Library*

Pianist: **David Tong**

There are no limits to Big Sky this year, so come and help us celebrate the opening of our 11th festival where you can meet our talented artists and be transformed by the music of former concert pianist **David Tong**. A chance to catch up with friends, make some new ones and plan the weekend ahead.



# SATURDAY 21 MAY

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## No Limits with **Steve Bisley**

9am - 9.45am

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

From a country childhood to a successful acting and writing career, **Steve Bisley** has pushed life to the limits. His story is sure to inspire.

## Poetry Masterclass: Finding voice and form with **Kevin Gillam**

10am - 12.30pm

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

Ticketed Event: \$50

Limited numbers: Please book and pay at the library

This class is for both experienced and novice poets. Participants will be asked to write to a given number of stimuli, including lines of text, music and tactile objects. Pieces of writing will then be read back to the group, and the concepts of both 'the voice' within the lines and matching these to a poetic form will be discussed. The forms to be embraced will include sonnet, villanelle, pantoum and sestina. Bring a pen, page and imagination!

## Fun and games in the kid's tent

10.15am - 11.15am

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

Join Library staff in the kid's tent for an hour of fun and games. Colour in stunning designs by Big Sky author and illustrator **Kyle Hughes-Odgers** or take home a sand art creation. Blow some bubbles, have your face painted and take part in activities for all ages. Free event and everyone welcome.



## Concurrent Sessions

10.15am - 11.15am

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

### Setting the scene

**Susan Midalia, Loretta Hill** and **Grantlee Kieza** with **Glyn Parry**.

Whether evoking familiar suburban landscapes, or describing unfamiliar territory, each of these writers manage to capture their settings so they become an integral part of their stories.

### Seeking identity

**Rosemary Sayer** and **Rod Jones** in conversation with **May Doncon**.

A refugee forced to flee from his homeland in a bid to survive. An unmarried mother forced to give up her child in 1960s Australia. Both victims of their time, both haunted by their past. Rod and Rosemary explore the pain of separation and loneliness contained in their two emotionally charged books.

### Artistic license – no limits

**Kyle Hughes-Odger's** large scale public art can be seen across the world. Learn about his process of ideas generation and storytelling for his murals, public art and children's books at this informative session.

# SATURDAY 21 MAY

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## Breathing Books

11.15am - 12.15pm

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

Breathing Books will bring the tales of the Midwest to life through living, breathing, human books. Each 'book' has a story they have lived on the topic of No Limits, and they will share those stories with 'readers', who can read up to 4 books in the session. Visitors to the 'library' will hear incredible tales from neighbours and people they might pass every day on the street. See topics at [www.library.cgg.wa.gov.au](http://www.library.cgg.wa.gov.au)

Reserve your book before the festival at the Geraldton Regional Library 9956 6659 or [library@cgg.wa.gov.au](mailto:library@cgg.wa.gov.au)

## Romance, Chick Lit, Fantasy: what's your preference?

11.45am - 12.45pm

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

**Loretta Hill** and **Lara Morgan** with **Lorraine Chapman**.

Are the lines between literary fiction and genre writing becoming blurred? Why have some genres become so popular in recent years? Join in the discussion with these talented writers.

## Capturing the fleeting moments of our lives: three perspectives

11.45am - 12.45pm

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

**Susan Midalia**, **Daniel Craig** and **Steve Bisley** with **Kerry Stewart**.

A short story writer, a photographer and an actor all strive to capture the essence of human emotion in their respective art forms. **Kerry Stewart** will help us explore how they each approach their artistic pursuits.

## The Great Debate: Facebook I hate you!

1.15pm - 2.15pm

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

Adjudicator: **Arthur Muhl**

It's always a packed house for the Great Debate, so make sure you arrive early, armed with a sense of humour and an open mind!

**Loretta Hill**, **Grantlee Kieza** and **Kyle Hughes-Odgers** versus locals **Julian Canny**, **Kath Jones** and **Mark Canny**.



# SATURDAY 21 MAY

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## Concurrent Sessions

2.45pm - 3.45pm

Venue: Various locations

### The Mothers

Venue: WA Museum Geraldton

**Rod Jones** in conversation with **Kate Naughtin**.

**Rod Jones'** novel *The Mothers* is drawn from his experiences as an adopted child. The session will conclude with an optional tour of the exhibition Without Consent: Australia's past adoption practices.

### Documenting a life with *Grantlee Kieza*

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

Writing a biography requires painstaking research and a keen eye for detail. Grantlee will describe the process he followed in preparation for his most recent stories *Monash: the soldier who shaped Australia* and *Bert Hinkler: the most daring man in the world*.

### My photographic journey with *Daniel Craig* and *Chris Lewis*

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

Self taught freelance photographer and film maker **Daniel Craig** uses composition, colour, light and movement as a language for the visual stories he creates. Learn about his dedication to photography and the major influences that drive his creativity.



## Big Sky Feast with *Steve Bisley* and *Loretta Hill*

6.30pm

Venue: Salt Dish Café

Ticketed event: \$100

Please book and pay at the Library. No BYO.

Enjoy sparkling wine on arrival, followed by a specially designed three course meal with matching wines. Leaf tea and barista made coffee will round off this special evening.

## Poetry in the Pub with *Kevin Gillam* and *Rosie Sitorus*

7pm

Venue: Bootenal Family Tavern

Ticketed event: \$42

Please book and pay at the Library. Bus departs from Library carpark at 6.30pm.

Poetry readings, music, open mic and great pub food have all the ingredients for an entertaining night at the historic Bootenal Family Tavern.

Music: **Geraldton Songwriters Syndicate**.





## Q & A: Australia is a lucky country, run mainly by second-rate people who share its luck.

9.30am - 10.30am

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

**Donald Horne's** book, published in 1964, was a wake up call to an unimaginative nation, an indictment of a country mired in mediocrity and manacled to its past. Has anything changed? Join **Grant Woodhams** with **Rod Jones, Rosemary Sayer, Kevin Gillam** and **Steve Bisley** at this Q & A session.

## Concurrent Sessions

11am - 12pm

Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre

### The art of re-invention

The privilege of being a writer is that you can say "Look, this is all the different people I am." **Rod Jones** and **Susan Midalia** discuss their writing with **Glyn Parry**.

### Writing romantic comedies with *Loretta Hill*

**Loretta Hill's** romantic, rural-based novels are always full of home grown comedy. If you're a budding writer and want a few good tips on what makes a good romantic comedy or a fan of this particular genre then this presentation is the one for you.

### Other people's stories

**Grantlee Kieza** and **Rosemary Sayer** in conversation with **Malcolm Smith**. Grantlee and Rosemary have used their journalistic skills to write about other people's lives. What is it that motivates their choice of subjects? Has their writing had a significant effect on how they view their role in society?

## Literary Lunch

1pm

Venue: *Bentwood Olive Grove*

MC: **Malcolm Smith**

Readings: **Susan Midalia, Steve Bisley** and **Rod Jones**

Ticketed event: \$65 BYO alcohol

Please book and pay at the Library.

Take a drive through the historic Greenough Flats to the atmospheric Bentwood Olive Grove where you will enjoy a gourmet lunch while listening to writers read some of their favourite passages. A perfect way to round off the weekend and bid farewell to our talented artists.



# BIOGRAPHIES

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## STEVE BISLEY

One of Australia's favourite actors, **Steve Bisley** broke into film with *Mad Max* (1979), and soon found himself in regular demand, appearing in many films, TV shows and theatre productions.

Steve turned to writing and has produced a classic memoir of an Australian childhood in the sixties. Young Steve was a larrikin, happy-go-lucky, resilient kid, coming of age in a simpler time. Growing up on a farm cut from virgin scrub at the end of a lake, a farm called *Stillways*.



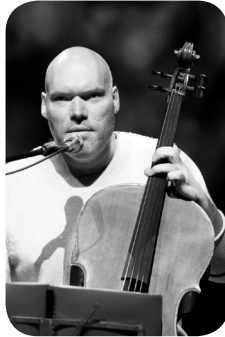
## DANIEL CRAIG

**Daniel Craig** (Matsu) was born and raised in Fremantle, Western Australia. He taught himself photography through immersion in Perth's local music scene, capturing the raw energy of performing artists onstage, backstage and on the road. With a passion for light, shadow and story, Daniel continues to challenge and refine his ideas on photography, letting his heart and photographer's instincts guide him. His work is influenced by a background in music, martial arts and the spiritual practice of Falun Gong.



## KEVIN GILLAM

**Kevin Gillam** has had poems published in *The Best Australian Poems 2006*, *The Best Australian Poems 2008* as well as *The Best Australian Poetry 2006*. His work has been broadcast on ABC Radio Poetica and he was the program's featured poet in 2007. Kevin is employed as Director of Music at Christchurch Grammar School and works as a freelance cellist and orchestral conductor.



## KYLE HUGHES-ODGERS

**Kyle Hughes-Odgers** is an Australian artist. He has held exhibitions and created public art extensively throughout Australia and internationally. He won a Society of Children's of Bookwriters and Illustrators Crystal Kite Award for his debut picture book, *Ten Tiny Things* (with Meg McKinlay). Other books include *On a Small Island*, *Can a Skeleton Have an X-Ray?* and *Off the Wall*.



# BIOGRAPHIES

## ROD JONES

**Rod Jones's** first novel, *Julia Paradise* (1986), won the fiction award at the 1988 Adelaide Festival, was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award and was runner-up for the Prix Femina Étranger. It has been translated into ten languages and is now available as a Text Classic. His four other novels, *Prince of the Lilies*, *Billy Sunday*, *Nightpictures*, and *Swan Bay*, have all either won or been shortlisted for major literary awards. Rod Jones lives near Melbourne. *The Mothers* is his most recent novel.



## GRANTLEE KIEZA

**Grantlee Kieza** is a prizewinning writer for *The Courier Mail* and *Sunday Mail* newspapers in Brisbane and has previously written for Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, *Sunday Telegraph* and *The Australian*, covering assignments in Europe, America, Asia and Africa. He is a Walkley Award finalist and the author of the best-selling biography *Bert Hinkler: The Most Daring Man in the World*. He has written 11 books. His latest are *Monash: The Soldier Who Shaped Australia* and *Boxing in Australia*, a history of the sport from the convict days to the modern era.



## LORETTA HILL

For her bestselling novels *The Girl in Steel-Capped Boots*, *The Girl in the Hard Hat* and *The Girl in the Yellow Vest*, Loretta Hill drew upon her own outback engineering experiences of larrikins, red dust and steel-capped boots. Her new novel, *The Maxwell Sisters*, was published in January 2015. She is also the author of the ebook novella *One Little White Lie*, which was a number one bestseller on iTunes.



## SUSAN MIDALIA

**Susan Midalia** is a writer and freelance editor who conducts workshops on short story writing. She grew up in the Western Australian wheatbelt, and has lived in Perth for most of her adult life. Her first short story collection, *A History of the Beanbag and other stories*, was shortlisted for the Western Australian Premier's Book Awards in 2007, and her second collection, *An Unknown Sky and other stories*, was shortlisted for the 2013 Queensland Literary Award (Steele Rudd Award). Her latest release is *Feet to the Stars and other stories*.



# BIOGRAPHIES

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## LARA MORGAN

**Lara Morgan** is the author of *The Rosie Black Chronicles*, a YA dystopian trilogy set in a future Australia, and the epic fantasy series for adults, *The Twins of Saranthium*. She was the winner of the 2003 *Australian Women's Weekly* Short Story competition and has had books published in Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Turkey and ebooks anywhere Amazon allows it. She loves travel, tea and stacking books.



## GLYN PARRY

**Glyn Parry** was born in the north-east of England. He grew up in the town where Billy Elliott was filmed. When he was 12 he came to Australia to live and was encouraged to write. In 1992 *LA Postcards* was published to critical acclaim. Since then there have been nine other books for teenagers and children: *Monster Man*, *Radical Take-offs*, *Mosh*, *Stoked!*, *Sad Boys*, *Scooterboy*, *Spooking the Cows*, *Harry & Luke* and *Invisible Girl*. His first novel for adults, *Ocean Road*, was published in 2007. Glyn is currently working on an adult thriller.



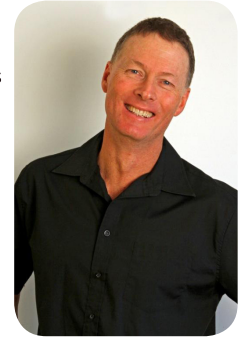
## ROSEMARY SAYER

**Rosemary Sayer** is a writer, a former journalist and a business communications consultant. Her third book *More to the Story - conversations with refugees* was published in November 2015 by Margaret River Press. Rosemary has previously written two biographies: *The Man who Turned the Lights On* (2006, later translated into Chinese), on Sir Gordon Wu, chairman of Hopewell Holdings, Hong Kong; and *The CEO, the Chairman and the Board* (2008), on Trevor Eastwood, former chairman and CEO of Wesfarmers Limited.



## ARTHUR MUHL

Since the early 1980s, Arthur has worked at numerous commercial and community radio stations as well as the local ABC. In 1991, Arthur relocated from Brisbane to Perth, continuing his broadcasting career as Breakfast Show host and Program Manager at a local radio station. Thankfully, he is a 'morning' person, although waking up at 4.30am is still a challenge in the cooler months. When not behind the microphone, Arthur spends his time dabbling in the kitchen and enjoys a variety of regular exercise and collecting music.



# BIOGRAPHIES

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## GRANT WOODHAMS

A former Speaker of the Western Australian Parliament, Woodhams retired from politics in early 2013 after two terms in the Legislative Assembly. Prior to that he had a long career with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation working in most States of Australia on both radio and television. Woodhams is also a passionate advocate for tertiary education in Geraldton and is a Board member of the Geraldton Universities Centre.



## DAVID TONG

**David Tong** migrated to Australia in 1988. Following an extensive period of study, he went on to study at the prominent Juilliard School of Music in New York and was awarded the Vladimir Horowitz scholarship. In addition to having been a frequent guest artist with all Australian Symphony orchestras, David was regularly invited to appear with many of today's top orchestras throughout the world. Since 2014, David has worked as a commercial pilot. He is currently based in Geraldton and works as a line pilot for Geraldton Air Charter.



## LORRAINE CHAPMAN

**Lorraine Chapman** is a primary school teacher at the best little school in the whole world, Chapman Valley. She loves teaching kids, her sausage dogs and the adventure of writing. Lorraine is the president of Geraldton's own writing group, Writers of the Coral Coast. "It is inspiring and exciting to meet with a group of writers, particularly when we all tackle the same writing exercise and see where the writing journey takes each one".

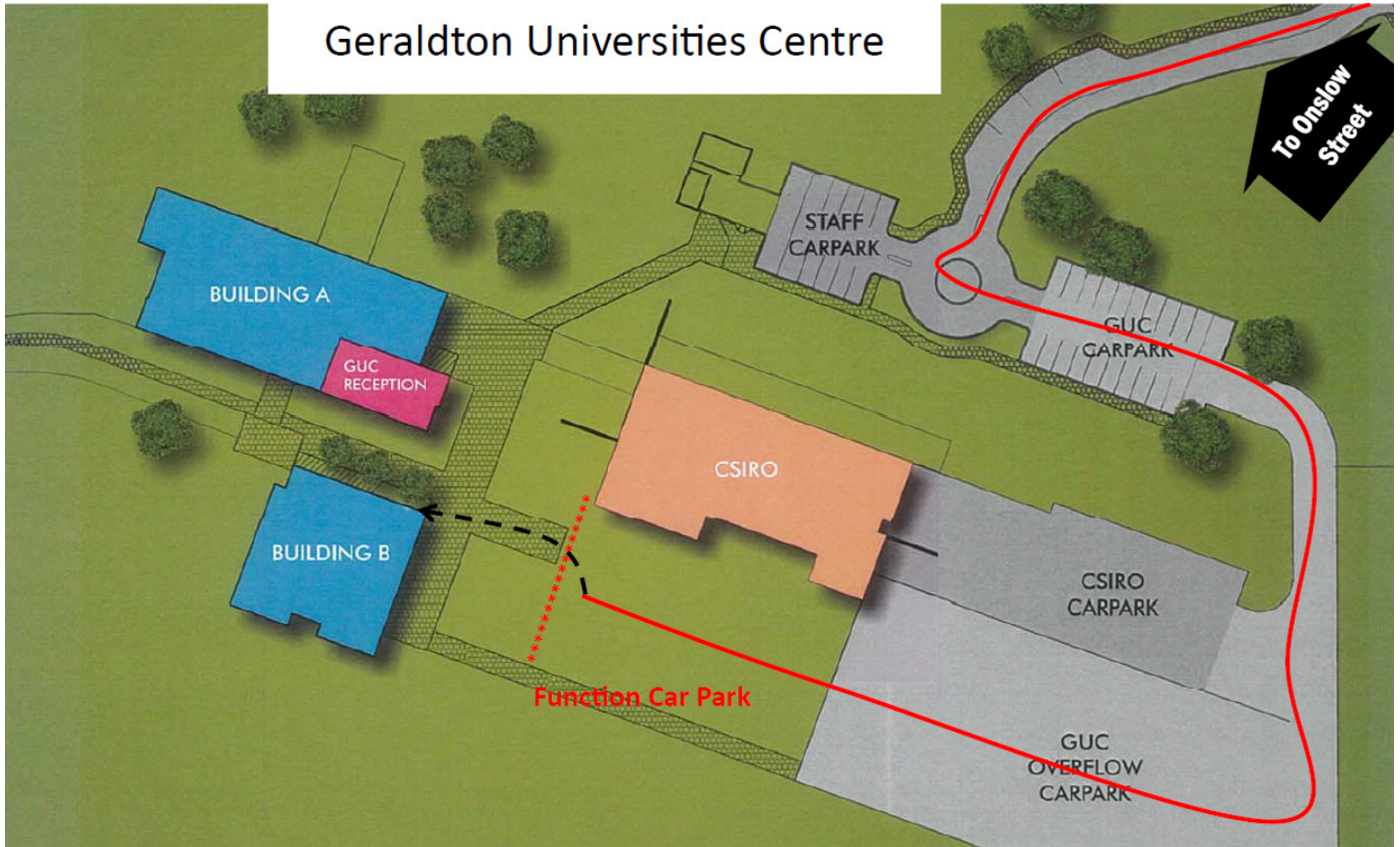


## ROSIE SITORUS

**Rosie Sitorus** is a linguist, language lover, writer, singer, storyteller, bike rider and dog fanatic, not necessarily in that order. She moved to Geraldton from Perth three years ago and hit the ground running, starting the Geraldton Poetry Club, producing the acclaimed Fringe World Perth and Adelaide Fringe show *Fat Girls in Bike Shorts* and popping up around town singing with her duo 'The Harmonies'. Rosie is an avid participator in the arts and culture of Geraldton and is curating the 'Breathing Books' session for Big Sky 2016.



# Geraldton Universities Centre



# LOCATIONS & CONTACTS

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## **Geraldton Regional Library**

37 Marine Terrace Geraldton.....Ph: (08) 9956 6659

## **Geraldton Universities Centre**

33 Onslow Street Geraldton.....Ph: (08) 9920 4400

## **Bootenal Family Tavern**

Cnr Edward & Bootenal Road Bootenal.....Ph: (08) 9923 3707

## **Bentwood Olive Grove**

34732 Brand Highway Greenough.....Ph: (08) 9926 1196

## **Salt Dish Café**

35 Marine Terrace Geraldton.....Ph: (08) 9964 6030

## **WA Museum - Geraldton**

2 Museum Place Geraldton.....Ph: (08) 9921 5080

## **Co-op Bookshop (pop up)**

*Venue: Geraldton Universities Centre*

Saturday: 8.30am - 4pm

Sunday: 8.30am - 12.30pm

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**Tarts & Co** will be providing a variety of tasty treats on site at the Geraldton Universities Centre.

Get your coffee fix from the **coffee van** which will also be on site.





[library.cgg.wa.gov.au](http://library.cgg.wa.gov.au)