

gawimarra (gather) under the watchful eyes of
balaagans skilled with time and wise with age –
custodians of place – keepers of the secrets of
wingadhan (women)

teaching the young minhis and mingaans
the lore of the land ...

... – gawimarra only what is needed –

gawimarra to birrabuwawanha –
birrabuwawanha to gawimarra
gather to return – return to gather

She listens – gawimarra stories –
reads them in the land she walks
‘Wagirra softly’ the balaagans tell her –
tread carefully on Country they say –
‘Balumbambal always watching’ –
the ancient ones – dead but not gone –
their blood flows through us –
gawimarra us listen – the dead speak all the time ...

— Jeanine Leane ‘The Gatherers’
Poetry in First Languages (Wiradjuri)

keepers of the secrets
return to gather

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2019 POETIC PROGRAM

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OUR STORY

Ngabay midyungngunbuni ngaliya
Together, you and I, we will heal

— Joel Davison ‘The Wounded Brave’
Poetry in First Languages (Gadigal)

VISION

Red Room Poetry’s vision is to make poetry a meaningful part of everyday life.

MISSION

Red Room Poetry (RR) is a national not-for-profit organisation that creates poetic projects and learning programs in collaboration with a spectrum of poets, schools, communities and partners for positive social impact.

Our mission is to make poetry accessible to all, especially those who face the greatest barriers to creative opportunities.

HISTORY

Since 2003, RR has grown to be Australia’s leading organisation for the creation and commissioning of new poetry. Reflecting the diversity of contemporary Australian voices, RR embraces all styles of poetry (page, performance, experimental, musical, visual) promoting the form across a range of landscapes, languages and mediums including installation, radio, stage, digital spaces and learning programs.

From poetic pathways to murals and mapping apps, our imaginative projects increase poetic visibility, vibrancy and engagement through creative contexts, professional payment of poets and cross-sector partnerships.

POETIC PROJECTS

INVENTION, QUALITY AND VISIBILITY

Poetic Moments
Extinction Elegies
New Shoots
RR Poetry Fellowship

POETIC LEARNING

ENRICHMENT, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

Poetry Object
Poems To Share II
Poetry In First Languages
Unlocked / Youth Unlocked

POETIC PARTNERSHIPS

COLLABORATION, REACH AND COLLECTIVE IMPACT

All RR projects and learning programs collaborate with Cultural, Environmental, Learning, Corporate, Media and Government partners.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



16 years

70+
major projects

240 partners

950+
poets commissioned
and employed

860,000+
digital reach p.a.

200,000+
students actively engaged

21
programs in
correctional centres



450
schools p.a.

4.3
million audiences p.a.

FROM OUR PATRON

the patient ground will sing
like a web of notes
and o those brilliant bones of paperbark

— Stuart Cooke
'Northern Long-nosed Potoroo'
Extinction Elegies

City eagles fly above the clouds
That shroud the mobile ants
Fogged in stares
Oblivious to daily life
Ready for the unknown
With Arnhem Land sounds
As a shaft of light
Strikes us awake
And the day dawns
With a poem
All is forgiven

— John B. Fairfax



*Poetry in First Languages East Nowra PS at Bundanon.
Image Tad Souden*

Over the years I have seen, and even written, in many annual reports. The Red Room Poetry report is different, for while it fulfils statutory obligations, it swerves wide of conformity to provide something of the flavour with which we deal on a regular basis. For me the association with an organisation that dwells on poetic themes and words, is a panacea in a world increasingly at odds with itself. Poems allow expressions of both truth and imagination – they are the canvas upon which we can dwell, interpret and absorb.

No work is ever complete without support tools, and I, as always, am deeply grateful for the many individuals and contributors who allow Red Room Poetry to reach into the creative spectrum of our nation in so many ways. It is important this continues and I encourage continuing commitment to enable our dedicated small team to further deliver poetic themes to encourage poets and put poetry at the forefront of our arts and literary agenda.

JOHN B. FAIRFAX AO
Patron

fly above the clouds that shroud the mobile ants

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

as the box opens the sky rejoices
and birds gather from everywhere

— Ali Cobby Eckermann
'Wind Song Lament'
Extinction Elegies



*Poetry in First Languages Gadigal workshop.
Image Tad Souden*

Language and poetry web our world and relationships with culture, place and creation.

Celebrating diverse voices in the International Year of Indigenous Languages, Red Room Poetry is amplifying poetic visibility and participation via installations in gardens, galleries, zoos, museums, and a national program of workshops.

With skies full of poetic possibilities, we also reflect on the meaningful moments of 2018, a year that saw RR commission 93 poets, deliver 179 poetic events, launch *Poetry in First Languages*, while publishing poems in cinemas, trains, buses, waterways, murals and lightboxes for audiences of 4.3 million.

Thanks to our generous supporters, partners and poetic communities who make these achievements possible. On behalf of our Board and team I warmly invite you to join us for another poetic year that awakens wonder, cherishes language and nurtures new Australian poetry.

DR TAMRYN BENNETT
Director

dissolves the distance between our best sides;
the most honest aesthetic one can affect
a picture-perfect profile to repeat on command
until all that's left is to confess:

I am not a singular instrument

— Allison Gallagher
'Portrait no 29'

Punch Lines: Poets Play Duchamp

OUR TEAM

PATRON

John B. Fairfax AO

BOARD

Acting Chair

Judith Pini

Treasurer

Craig Lawn

Board Members

Johanna Featherstone

Kiersten Fishburn

Andrew FitzSimons

Mary Gillespie

Observership Program

Nathan Barker

STAFF

Director

Dr Tamryn Bennett

Director External Relations

Sally Marwood

Director Operations

Jennine Primmer

Manager Poetic Learning

Kirli Saunders

Producer Poetic Learning

Emma Rose Smith

Communications Coordinator

Amelia Theodorakis

Office Manager

Lorin Reid

and our dedicated volunteers



*Jacob Morris, Gumea
Dharawal Language
Custodian opens poetic
workshops on country.
Image Tad Souden*



2019

POETIC PROGRAM



*New Shoots WA with poet
performance and Q & A
Image Jason Thomas*

In human time we will have shed
whole versions of ourselves
before one leaf dislodges from
its stem...

— Nandi Chinna
'Sweedman's Sprawling Mallee'
New Shoots WA

2019 POETIC PROJECTS

Celebrating a diversity of established, emerging and student voices, our 2019 Poetic Projects cultivate invention, creation and collaboration via a range of poetic forms.

With support from our partners we aim to amplify poetic participation, visibility and relevance across communities, cultures, languages and landscapes nationally and internationally.



POETIC MOMENTS



EXTINCTION ELEGIES

2019 POETIC MOMENTS

Poetic Moments (PM) engages experimental platforms to publish poetry in highly visible and accessible ways for audiences of all ages.

Embracing multiple languages, inventive platforms and artforms, PM creates opportunities to respond and reflect via poetic provocations and partnerships that connect people and place through poetry.

Poetic Moments is made possible by Australia Council for the Arts and our generous partners.

1. *Cookaroo Flow* interactive audio installation.
2. *Punch Lines: Poets Play Duchamp* poetic labels and performance at Art Gallery of NSW.
3. *Poetic crossword* Sydney Morning Herald and The Age.

JAN

- First Nations poetry on Sydney trains
- *Poetry Object* animation screened in NSW, QLD, VIC and NT cinemas with Val Morgan
- *Cookaroo Flow* - poems from *Poetry in First Languages* workshops embedded in waterways at Royal Botanic Garden Sydney



APR

- *New Shoots* at Sydney Olympic Park with site-specific First Nations poems etched permanently into the Badu Mangrove Boardwalk

Every species is a world of sound



NEW SHOOTS



RR POETRY FELLOWSHIP

MAY

- *Punch Lines: Poets Play* Duchamp poetic exhibition labels and cryptic crossword with the Art Gallery of NSW for Sydney Writers' Festival



SEP - OCT

- *Flow Bundjalung* poems from *Poetry in First Languages* workshops embedded in waterways in Ballina
- *Poetry on the Block* pop-up installation along George Street tram line featuring student poems inspired by Sydney city
- *New Shoots WA* poetic trail on plant tags at Kings Park and Botanic Garden, Perth



JUL

- *Extinction Elegies* lightbox installation in situ for MUSE at Taronga Zoo, Sydney
- Eco-poetry projected in Perth for NAIDOC Week

DEC

- *Poetry Object* animation screened in cinemas across Australia
- *First Nations Poetry Anthology* with linked learning resources

2019 EXTINCTION ELEGIES

Every species is a world
Of sound, a solid form of silence said.
A body
Of thought.

— Mark Tredinnick
'Litany: An Elegy'
Extinction Elegies

RR is collaborating with Durham University and Little Toller Books to develop a series of trans-national poetic commissions entitled *Extinction Elegies*. The project explores literatures of environment and loss through the creation of new elegies in response to recent extinctions of fauna and flora. We aim to encourage awareness, attention, empathy and action through poetry writing and linked learning resources.

Poems will be published by Little Toller Book with radio broadcasts, conference presentations, poetic workshops and call out opportunities.

AUSTRALIAN POETS

Bruce Pascoe, Ali Cobby Eckermann,
Michelle Cahill, Mark Tredinnick, John Kinsella,
Stuart Cooke



Mark Tredinnick commissioned poet.
Image Christopher Phillips

2019 NEW SHOOTS

I am a hollow chamber
there is no wind to sing me
swept clean, draughty and shifting
my body's shell casting new shadows

— Renee Pettitt-Schipp
'Karri (or, Slow Arrival in Karri Country)'
New Shoots WA



New Shoots WA poets. Image: Jason Thomas

New Shoots, created by RR in 2016, cultivates poetry inspired by plants to deepen our creative and cultural connections with nature by growing a garden of poems across Australia.

With support from Eucalypt Australia and City of Perth, five WA poets are writing and recording new poems about mallee species, sites and ecosystems in WA and Kings Park.

Poetic trails and performances are part of Perth Festival in February and Kings Park Festival in September. Poetic seed cards are scattered and poems will be planted in Kings Park.

POETS

Nandi Chinna, Daniel Hansen, Luke Sweedman, Renee Pettitt-Schipp, Scott-Patrick Mitchell

"I hope that by poets paying attention to mallee trees, and teaching kids to engage with the wonder and uniqueness of our mallee, that these miraculous species will have a more hopeful future."

— Nandi Chinna

"I hope that what I have delivered and planted in the garden of poems will help to nourish the overall landscape. I feel that my poetic credentials have been verified."

— Luke Sweedman

2019 RED ROOM POETRY FELLOWSHIP

Too many years since I breathed this air
– Buni-ng – ganha
Felt this dirt – Ngamanhi Dhaagun
Smelt this dust – Budha – nhi Bunan

— Jeanine Leane
'Nurambang Yali Country speaks'
Poetry in First Languages (Wiradjiri)



Jeanine Leane, 2019 Fellow.

The *Red Room Poetry Fellowship* recognises the achievements and artistic goals of contemporary Australian poets previously commissioned by RR.

Our 2019 Fellow, Jeanine Leane, was chosen by an expert Arts panel from 33 entries. In response to the high quality of *Fellowship* submissions we also offered poetic commissions to shortlisted poets aligned with the theme of their proposed project.

Our inaugural Fellow was internationally awarded Yankunytjatjara poet Ali Cobby Eckermann, followed by the inimitable Candy Royalle in 2018.

THE FELLOW RECEIVES:

- \$5000 poetic stipend
- \$1000 commission
- 2 x weeks residency at Bundanon Trust
- Opportunity to undertake an intensive period of writing, professional development, publication and workshop delivery.

The *Fellowship* is made possible with support from generous individuals and Bundanon Trust.

"This project seeks to give some voice back to Aboriginal places that are screaming to be heard under the colonial mythscape of settler monuments, plaques and signage."

- Jeanine Leane

*Smelt this dust Budha nhi
Bunan*



40

WHEN LIGHTS F L A

The djadjun (moon) tastes like
cookies and cream ice cream.
as it rises above the gadu (occ)
it shines on the gali (dance).

Warrawong Public School, Yr 4



Safe
Respectful
Responsible

Warrawong Public School student
Victoria with her poem in
Dharawal on Illawarra buses.
Image Tad Souden

2019 POETIC LEARNING

The manda is a calm place
that welcomes you to the land
Gundu at nighttime
Djadjun lights the way

— Ella, Warrawong Public School,
Poetry in First Languages (Dharawal)

The manda is a calm place that welcomes...

*Poetry in First Languages Dharawal
workshops with art, music and dance.
Image Todd Hardingham*





POETRY OBJECT



POETRY IN FIRST LANGUAGES

RR's Poetic Learning programs inspire students, teachers and diverse communities to actively create, perform and publish poetry. We enliven learning through poetry by inviting contemporary poets to lead writing workshops that awaken curiosity, nurture creativity and support cultural opportunities.

"Thank you again for such a fantastic workshop. I have heard nothing but positive feedback from the kids about the day and I love that you were able to bring out such creativity and more importantly, connection to culture in everyone involved."

— Alexandra Bateman, English Teacher, Moss Vale HS

"It was the best experience I have ever had. Now I know more about culture."

— Student, North Nowra PS, Poetry in First Languages

OUR 2019 GOALS

200+
workshops nationally

8
professional development sessions

130+
poets, artists, Elders and Language Custodians employed and mentored

2019 POETRY OBJECT

Escape hatch from
urbanity. Bird hide, forced crouch
sunrise sauna, portable hole,
modesty screen, refuge ...

— Jacqui Malins
'To My Tent'
Poetry Object



Scott-Patrick Mitchell at Art Gallery of NSW.
Image Nicola Bailey

OUR 2019 PO GOALS

180+

school communities
engaged across
Australia and NZ

3,000+

student poems
published

17+

poets and
artists employed

46,000+

audiences engaged
nationally via
animation screenings

RR's *Poetry Object* (PO) project is Australasia's largest free national poetry competition for students and teachers (Years 3-10). Since 2011, PO has ignited imaginations while fostering the creation and publication of 15,000+ student and teacher poems about special 'talismanic' objects.

With national partnerships and over \$10,000 in prizes, *Poetry Object* also provides professional publishing outcomes for all participants, free curriculum-aligned learning resources for teachers and the commissioning of new object-inspired poems by professional poets who lead poetic learning workshops.

Our 2019 PO partners include Art Gallery of NSW, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Australia, Regional Express, Copyright Agency and the Oranges and Sardines Foundation.

"Thanks for all the support and ways you make poetry vital in our school. Red Room is a wonderful resource and a fantastic opportunity."

— John Cole, Burgmann Anglican School, Poetry Object

"After the workshop I felt like I had learned a lot and came away with a different outlook on poetry."

— Student, Riverside Girls High, poetry and circuitry workshops at Powerhouse Museum

2019 POETRY IN FIRST LANGUAGES

... the guwung is your wiyanga gura,
Yanung over you.
The sun is your mother warming,
Looking over you.

— Biwali, Alexandria Park
Community School,
Poetry in First Languages (Gadigal)



*Students in Poetry in First Languages Gadigal workshops.
Image Tad Souden*

Developed by Gunai poet Kirli Saunders and delivered by RR, *Poetry in First Languages* (PIFL) celebrates, shares and preserves knowledge of First Nations languages and culture through poetry, music, dance and art. By connecting First Nations students with poets, Elders and Language Custodians on country, we aim to strengthen language learning to empower students to feel pride in their cultural identities and enhance wellbeing.

Independent evaluation by BYG Group of the NSW PIFL pilot program found 94% of participants were positively impacted by the program and 95% of school communities involved had no other access to First Nations language programs. See report p.35

Together with our First Nations Advisory Council, RR is celebrating the Year of Indigenous Languages and embracing NAIDOC's theme Voice Treaty Truth.

"On behalf of my family I wanted to thank Kirli and everyone at RR for the opportunity to get our Great Grandmother's Language out there as these poems are the first publications in Gumea-Dharawal; A historical moment for our family."

— Jacob Morris, Language Custodian (Gumea Dharawal)

OUR 2019 PIFL GOALS

35
workshops in
12 languages

48
poets commissioned,
published and
performing

20
Elders, Language
Custodians, community
members and artists
employed

OUR POETS 2018-2019

Sydnye Allen NSW
Richard James Allen NSW
Eunice Andrada NSW
Evelyn Araluen NSW
Sediqah Ansari NSW
David Astle VIC
Maryam Azam NSW
Emilie Zoey Baker VIC
Stuart Barnes QLD
Ethan Bell NSW
Maxine Beneba Clarke VIC
Tamryn Bennett NSW
Lilly Blue WA
Susan Bradley Smith WA
Nick Bryant Smith NSW
Pascale Burton QLD
Michelle Cahill NSW

Nandi Chinna WA
Ali Cobby Eckermann SA
Claire G Coleman WA/VIC
Paul Collis ACT
Stuart Cooke QLD
Emily Crocker NSW
Arielle Cottingham TAS
Joel Davison NSW
Joel Deaves NSW
Gloria Demillo NSW
Tricia Dearborn NSW
Shastra Deo QLD
Winnie Dunn NSW
Quinn Eades VIC
Lorin Elizabeth NSW
Pola Fanous NSW
Michael Farrell VIC
Dakota Feirer NSW

Luke Fischer NSW
Toby Fitch NSW
Lionel Fogarty QLD
Anna Forsyth NSW
Zenobia Frost QLD
Brian Fuata NSW
Declan Furber Gillick NT
Allison Gallagher NSW
Joe Geia QLD
Nikki Gemmel NSW
Mindy Gill QLD
Phoebe Grainer NSW
Daniel Hansen WA
Matthew Heffernan NT
Johnathan Hill NSW
Sarah Holland-Batt QLD
Josh Holmes NSW

A DIVERSITY OF POETS

RR commissions, mentors and employs
90+ poets annually, spanning diverse styles,
stages, places and languages.

Our community of 950+ poets continues
to grow.



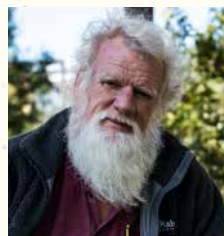
David Stavanger



MIRRAH



Evelyn Araluen

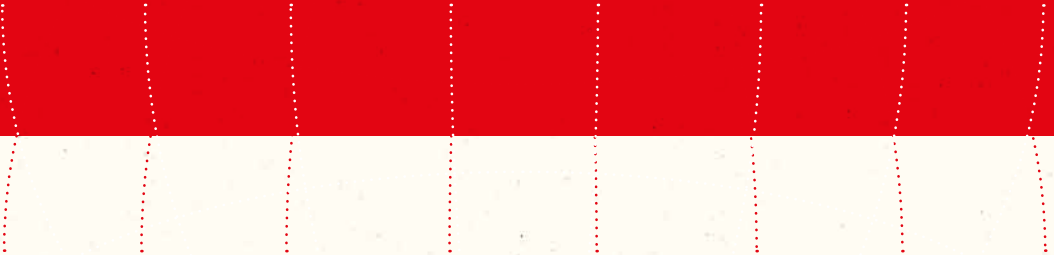


Bruce Pascoe

L.K Holt VIC
Yvette Holt NT
Eleanor Jackson VIC
Anna Jacobson QLD
Gabrielle Journey Jones NSW
John Kinsella WA
Benjamin Laird VIC
Jeanine Leane VIC
Bella Li VIC
Grace Lucas-Pennington QLD
Caitlin Maling WA
Jacqui Malins ACT
Lola McDowell WA
MANTRA VIC
Graeme Miles TAS
Peter Minter NSW
MIRRAH NSW

Scott-Patrick Mitchell WA
Jacob Morris NSW
Lorna Munro NSW
Melanie Mununggurr-Williams NT
Kevin Ngo NSW
Bruce Pascoe VIC
Nick Paton NSW
Renee Pettitt-Schipp WA
Lillian Rodriguez-Pang NSW
Candy Royale NSW
Sara Saleh NSW
Kirli Saunders NSW
Courtney Sina Meredith NZ
Emma Rose Smith NSW
Zechariah Soakai NZ
David Stavanger NSW
Luke Sweedman WA

Maria Takolander VIC
Maureen Ten NSW
Mark Tredinnick NSW
Lindsay Urquhart NSW
Ellen Van Neerven QLD
Arjun von Caemmerer TAS
Adrian Webster NSW
Anna Westbrook NSW
Scotty Wings VIC
Alison Whittaker NSW
Jessica Wilkinson VIC
Emily Wurramara NT
Elliot York Cameron NSW
Nadia Zeaiter NSW
Zohab Zee Khan NSW



Scott-Patrick Mitchell



Arielle Cottingham



Joel Davison



Maryam Azam



Michelle Cabill



Daniel Hansen



2018

ANNUAL REPORT

A group of young men, likely students, are shown in profile, focused on their work. They are wearing white t-shirts with navy blue accents and caps. One man in the foreground is holding a long, thin wooden plume. The background is filled with lush green foliage, suggesting an outdoor setting like a garden or park. The overall atmosphere is one of concentration and hands-on learning.

*Poetry in First Languages
Gadigal workshop at
Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.
Image Tad Souden*

Soon you too will have
a cap full of plumes,
a head filled with wings,
a horizon to fly into

— Scott-Patrick Mitchell
'on how to be a bird'
RR Fellowship shortlist

2018 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

made of the earth,
mouthful by mouthful

— Michelle Cahill 'Mal de la mer,
or I walked the island searching for you'
Extinction Elegies

made of th

In 2018, RR supported poetic participation and nourished community connections, creating impact and change through imaginative projects and meaningful cross-sector partnerships. From streaming poems through waterways to performing within medieval tapestries, we commissioned, projected, staged and published poetry in new and unexpected ways, providing an abundance of poetic opportunities for artists and audiences.

With the launch of *Poetry in First Languages* we also focused on supporting and celebrating the poetic voices of First Nations communities through highly visible and inventive poetic installations like *Tumbalong Gatherers* at Darling Harbour and *Cookaroo Flow* at the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney. First Nations student poems enlivened streetscapes and school communities in regional towns via buses and murals while our independent evaluation by BYP Group showed the project's deep impact and value in 2019 and beyond.

"We still can't stop buzzing from this incredible performance and project. An enormous thank you to you all for your dedication, talent, energy and words. Those tapestries will never be seen in the same way again! You brought them to life in a way that moved people and opened up new ways of seeing and understanding."

— Alexandra Gregg, Public Programs Producer
Art Gallery NSW

39,000
attendees



the earth. mouthful by mouthful



93

poets commissioned, published and performed



90+
partners

179
events

860,000
digital reach p.a.

39
supporting artists
and Language
Custodians

4,300,000
audiences across Australia

7,350
students actively
creating



2018 POETIC PROJECTS



POETIC MOMENTS



EXTINCTION ELEGIES

2018 POETIC MOMENTS

Poetic Moments (PM) elevates the accessibility and visibility of contemporary Australian poetry, connecting people and place by publishing in inventive and unexpected ways from buses to boardwalks, lightboxes and trains, murals, soundscapes and sculptural installations.

1. Student rap in Green Square window.
2. *Timbalong Gatherers* for NAIDOC Week with First Nations poems.
3. Moss Vale High School, *Poetry in First Languages*.

JAN

- *Poetry Object* Animation screened in NSW, VIC and TAS cinemas with Val Morgan with 26.1K audiences

FEB

- Australian Design Centre 'Obsessed' exhibition with commission, performance and workshops

MAR — APR

- *Poetry in First Languages* launches with poems on murals in Gundungurra language in Southern Highlands, NSW for World Poetry Day



MAY

- *Poetic Threads: The Lady and the Unicorn* in collaboration with Art Gallery of NSW and Sydney Writers' Festival. First Australian commission of poems and performance inspired by the centuries-long connection between the sensory tapestries and literature.
- Green Square and Alexandria Park Community Behavioural Intervention School poems performed and displayed in window boxes at Green Square with MIRVAC



NEW SHOOTS



RR POETRY FELLOWSHIP

JUN

- T-shirts with Bundjalung language celebrating *Unlocked* Balund-a workshops and NAIDOC week with Corrective Services NSW
- Dharawal student poems from *Poetry in First Languages* workshops in the Illawarra on buses

AUG

- Secret Garden nine metre mural at Zetland with MIRVAC



JUL

- *Poems to Share II* learning resource with 40 poets and workshop activities launched in partnership with the Australian Association for the Teaching of English.
- *Tumbalong Gatherers* First Nations poetry on lightboxes at Darling Square and Darling Quarter with Twitter poetry writing competition on Sydney Trains for NAIDOC Week with Darling Quarter, LendLease, Jones La Salle and Properties NSW.

DEC

- Following *Poetry in First Languages* (Gadigal) workshops at Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, Gadigal poetry created by NT and NSW First Nations students (with NASCA) was embedded by artist Allan Giddy in the *Cookaroo Flow* soundscape, 1 December 2018 - 28 February 2019
- *Poetry Object* animation screened in NSW, QLD, NT and ACT cinemas with Val Morgan

2018 EXTINCTION ELEGIES

And regret is that the bird is gone,
Disappeared
Because we didn't love enough?
Or because the angle of the sphere
is out of our control

— Bruce Pascoe 'Loss'
Extinction Elegies

2018 OUTCOMES

6

poets commissioned

3

international partners

Six Australian poets were commissioned to write new elegies in response to recent extinctions. Exploring loss and longing, these poems will be broadcast and published in 2019 in conjunction with our trans-national partners including Durham and Sheffield Universities, Little Toller Books and The Centre for the History of Emotions, and Community Radio Network.

"I was travelling through the Gariward country looking at the trees altered by the old people for ceremonial purposes and I kept thinking of an azure kingfisher which I had found dead after colliding with a window the day before and so my thoughts were all about beauty, death and love."

— Bruce Pascoe, Bunurong poet





Grief is rembetiko heard through an
open window
as the quandong
fruits at dusk—

— Sarah Holland-Batt 'Blue Quandong'
New Shoots Cairns

The *New Shoots* garden of poems grew and flourished across Australia with workshops and plant-inspired poems at the Cairns Botanic Gardens as part of the Cairns Tropical Writers Festival.

In Victoria we collaborated with Australian Poetry and Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria to pilot the OutLoud EcoSlam competition with performances at the Melbourne Writers Festival. *New Shoots* plant-inspired poems were exhibited at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and Victoria with community workshops.

With support from our partners, we commissioned five WA poets to respond to mallee species in Kings Park and WA for 2019 performances with Perth Festival and Writers Week.

"My poetic adventures have just begun and I hope to continue influencing others through my words and enabling them to find deeper meanings and purposes to their own lives and dreams."

— Akegma, Student,
OutLoud Eco! Slam winner

2018 OUTCOMES

9

poets
commissioned

7

workshops and events

8

partners

2018 RED ROOM POETRY FELLOWSHIP

Each thread is its own story
everything woven
is first a lonely particle

— Candy Royalle
'Threading Battle Lines'
RR Poetry Fellow



Candy Royalle Red Room Poetry Fellow 2018.

2018 OUTCOMES

11

poets commissioned

15

poems published

Esteemed poet and activist Candy Royalle was our 2018 Fellow. She performed with RR's *Poetic Threads: Lady and the Unicorn* exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW weeks before her untimely passing. RR, along with Candy's family and friends, created a film, 'A Thousand Tiny Awakenings' capturing her enduring personal and poetic legacy.

In response to the high quality of *Fellowship* submissions, 11 shortlisted poets were also offered a poetic commission aligned with the theme of their proposed project for the *Fellowship*.

Shortlisted poets included Emilie Zoey Baker, Michael Farrell, Zenobia Frost, LK Holt, Jill Jones, Jeanine Leane, Graeme Miles, Scott-Patrick Mitchell, Maria Takolander and Omar Sakr.

"The diversity of form shown in this shortlist is a great representation of Australian poetry and what the Red Room Fellowship is doing to support poets across styles, cultures and career stages. Some of Australia's most experimental, engaging and hardworking poets are listed here and each of them is defining poetry on their own terms."

— Fellowship Judging Panel

2018 POETIC LEARNING

Like a cloudy
sky in my heart.
It breaks when I see it.

— Jana 'a picture of my brother'
Poetry Object Primary Winner



Kangaroo Valley Public School poetry writing workshops.

In 2018 RR's Poetic Learning programs connected poets with school students, marginalised and remote communities and inmates to actively create, perform and publish poetry for audiences nationally.

200+ poetic workshops were delivered, employing and matching poets and artists to communities. Key Poetic Learning programs were *Poetry Object*, *Poetry in First Languages*, *New Shoots*, the *RR Fellowship*, *Unlocked* and were tailored to meet participant needs.

NESA accredited professional development workshops and resources supported poetry creation within educational contexts.

"We had a great day with Gabrielle Journey Jones. Her ability to work with all our K-6 students was fantastic to observe. She had them all engaged with her rap introductions and drumming and was able to help the students make a connection to our trees, and places special to the students in the Valley."

— Andrew Smee, Principal,
Kangaroo Valley PS

2018 OUTCOMES

350

school communities nationally, 66% regional and remote

8,234+

students and teachers

3,277

poems published

137

employment opportunities

2018 POETRY OBJECT

This bird statue has flown down
the generations
and landed at my doorstep.

— Shyam 'My Inheritance'
Poetry Object Regional Express Winner



*Poetry Object workshops.
Image Tawfik Elgazzar*

2018 OUTCOMES

180

schools across
Australasia

2,526

student and teacher
poems published

15

partners including
Art Gallery of NSW,
Museum of Applied
Arts and Sciences

26,100

audiences engaged
nationally via animation
screenings

From music boxes to miniature cows, maps to puppy teeth, *Poetry Object* 2018 published poems via animations, on trains and in imaginative ways to encourage students and teachers to create poetry inspired by special objects.

As Australasia's largest free poetry competition with \$10,000+ in prizes, we presented multi-lingual workshops and professional development, commissioned six new poets, designed accredited learning resources and collaborated with national partners across Arts, Culture and Science sectors.

"I had forgotten how terrific poetry is. What amazing little philosophers you have showcased!"

— Joanne Patrick, Corporate
Communications Manager,
Regional Express (Rex)

"Thanks so much for this opportunity for our students. They are so excited at the thought that they are being published widely. You are doing a fabulous job. You are giving young writers a sense that their work is valuable."

— Michele Armstrong, Teacher,
Aquinas College

this bird statue has flown

2018 POEMS TO SHARE II

Held by mostly mountains now
You wear crowns of returning eucalypt

— Evelyn Araluen
'K1: Yellowmunde'
Poems to Share II



Created in partnership with the Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE), *Poems to Share II* features 40 poetic activity cards to spark poetic creation and learning in classrooms, libraries and community. An extended digital resource is free with purchase.

Inspired by *Poetry Object* commissioned poets, student and teacher poems, this interactive resource was designed to support educators to deepen poetic engagement, encourage imaginative thinking and ensure alignment with key curriculum outcomes through language, literature and literacy.

"One of the benefits is with teachers who just aren't sure about, or lack confidence in identifying poetic technique. The resource (P to S II) does this brilliantly. I'm suggesting it also as gift for graduating and farewelling teachers because it is both beautiful and practical. It's a brilliant resource, and I love the mix of poets, especially the Australian kids."

— Rosie Kerin, independent education consultant

2018 OUTCOMES

40

poets, students and teachers commissioned

1,025+

teachers engaged at AATE national conference

500+

sales

own down the generation

2018 POETRY IN FIRST LANGUAGES

water, grass, hearing things
we see water like sky
kwaty, atherrken, awepwarm
nwnern arem kwaty alkerater

— Emmanuel, Laramba School, NT
Poetry in First Languages (Arnernte)



*Gadigal workshop at Royal Botanic Garden Sydney
Image Tād Souden*

2018 OUTCOMES

24

First Nations poets,
Elders and Language
Custodians employed

366

First Nations students
engaged

300

poems published

300,000+

audiences

Poetry in First Languages (PIFL) is led by First Nation poets to nurture intercultural dialogue that unpacks shame, encourages cultural exploration and connection with country. Elders and Language Custodians are supported to share Aboriginal languages and culture through poetry and the creative arts.

Led by Gunai poet and Manager of Poetic Learning, Kirli Saunders, in 2018 we piloted programs with First Nations students from 39 school communities with commissioned and published poetry in 11 First Nations languages.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan was endorsed and a new partnership with Reconciliation Australia formed.

Comprising mentors from the education, business, language, poetry, literature and cultural sectors, RR's First Nations Advisory Council was established to provide mentorship for Kirli Saunders while supporting culturally responsible engagement with communities and the optimum delivery of PIFL programs.

*"You've opened my eyes
And shown me the way
To look... To learn... To teach..."*

— Shane, Kelly, Matthew
Participants of Reconciliation
Conference, UOW

In 2018, RR commissioned an independent evaluation of our *Poetry in First Languages* (PIFL) pilot program by BYP Group. Key findings of this report inform PIFL and all aspects of RR's Poetic Learning programs for future expansion and improvement.

Find out more:

redroomcompany.org/projects/poetry-first-languages/

"To see the kid's faces when they can't write poetry let alone write poetry in language then coming out with a piece of poetry that has language in it and has meaning behind it for them individually, that's the gratitude I get from this project... Sharing language, empowering all kids of the next generation to be proud of Aboriginal languages."

— Aunty Jodi Edwards, Dharawal Custodian

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE NEED

PIFL addresses a clear gap in the educational and cultural offer for First Nations students in NSW. The program was a one-of-kind opportunity for almost all of the First Nations participants. 95% of the schools and communities involved in PIFL had no other access to First Nations language programs.

THE EXPERIENCE

The overwhelming majority of participants reported a positive experience of the program (94%). Participants learned new First Nations language skills, cultural knowledge, and how to express themselves through poetry. The fun and engaging nature of the program meant that students transitioned from 'unsure' or 'nervous' at the start of the workshop to happy, 'loud and proud' by the end.

THE IMPACT

The program instilled confidence about their language, identity and culture, in First Nations children. Many participants shifted from feeling a general disinterest and lack of confidence at the start of the day, to feeling engaged, confident and more knowledgeable about themselves and their culture by the end of the workshop. Some children discovered family relationships as a result of the workshop, and are continuing to deepen these connections.

For the Elders, poets and Custodians involved in the program, PIFL was deeply affirming of culture and language, and offered hope that these would be passed on to the next generation.

THE PROCESS

Participants reported a positive experience of the process, and many hoped to do the program again. When asked what they liked about the program, 54% reported that they liked the sense of connecting with Country, Elders and poets.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

BYP Group recommends that PIFL be continued and deepened to allow longer or repeat engagement with the program by students, and expanded to reach more communities. We recommend that Red Room Poetry:

- Maintain the model of working closely with Elders, Language Custodians and poets and continue to use multiple poetic artforms ranging across dance, poetry and all the creative arts
- Continue to publish and perform the poetic works of poets and students, as this amplifies the sense of pride and self-value experienced by participants
- Continue to hold programs offsite in locations which allow for outdoor activities and connection with nature and Country

2018 UNLOCKED AND YOUTH UNLOCKED

When I walk in the streets
of the Green Square hood,
once where old factories
and warehouses stood
Fresh apartments, just 'cause they could

— Green Square School
'Green Square, What's Good?'
Youth Unlocked



Smoking ceremony Unlocked Balund-a.

2018 OUTCOMES

35

Youth Unlocked
students

22

Unlocked inmates
(90% First Nations)

120+

Unlocked community

Endorsed by
Corrective
Services NSW

Unlocked, endorsed by Corrective Services NSW, supported an intensive one-week creative literacy program with poets, musicians and artists at Balund-a Diversionary Centre for NAIDOC Week. With the aim to reduce reoffending through improved self-expression and wellbeing, workshops culminated in performances, recordings and broadcasts on national and community radio.

Youth Unlocked successfully delivered workshops in Shepherd's Park Juvenile Justice Centre with support from Wagga Wagga Council and at Green Square Behavioural School with performances of the rap at MIRVAC's Social Corner in inner Sydney.

"Seeing the residents engage in the programs is great; they all usually stand back, for feelings of shame, but when one is engaged ... volunteer for dancing; as this requires confidence and also feeling 'safe'. As for the poems, they were also great, as it comes from what they've been through themselves and it's their interpretation of their lives."

— Michael Cain, Coordinator,
Program support Unlocked
Balund-a

When I walk in

*Student recordings
Cookaroo Flow
interactive audio installation.
Image Tad Souden*



the streets of the green square hood...

2018 POETIC PARTNERSHIPS

RR values our poetic partners and is deepening collaborations to cultivate creative communities, increase audience engagement and collective impact.

We would especially like to thank our partners, poets, artists and all the creatives who encourage and inspire us.

90+ poetic partners

90+

poetic partners and collaborators

CULTURE

AIME, Australian Design Centre, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Art Gallery of NSW, Australian Poetry, Bankstown Arts Centre & Poetry Slam, black&writel, Booranga Writers Centre, Bundanon Trust, Cairns Tropical Writers Festival, Casula Powerhouse, Digital Writers' Festival, Enough Said Poetry Slam, Melbourne Writers Festival, Merrigong Theatre Company, National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Australia, Northern Rivers Arts Centre, NT Writer's Centre, NZ Poetry Day, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Perth Festival, Perth Writers Week, Queensland Poetry Festival, Sculpture by the Sea, South Coast Writers Centre, Sweatshop, Sydney Writers' Festival, Taronga Zoo, Young Writers Festival, Wollongong Art Gallery, Word in Hand, WordTravels



CORPORATE

Corban & Blair, EY Foundation, Darling Quarter, Laureate Design - Billy Blue, Jones La Salle, LendLease, Magabala Books, Mirvac, Regional Express, Val Morgan



and collaborators



MEDIA

ABC, ABC Radio National & Central West, Bay FM, Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, Express Media, Go Transit Media, Kabuku PR, Kookie, Koori Mail, Koori Radio, Morey Media, Sydney Arts Guide, The Planthunter, S&J Media, Torch Media

EDUCATION

Aboriginal Education Council, ACE Community College, Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Centre for the History of Emotions, Durham University, English Teacher Associations nationally, Illawarra Multicultural Services, Mirromaa Language Centre, National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy, NESAs, NYU Sydney, Questacon, QUT, Reconciliation Australia and NSW, Department of Education and school communities nationally, Northern Rivers TAFE, UOW, UNSW, USYD, UTS, WSU



GOVERNMENT

Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Australian Council for the Arts, City of Sydney, Copyright Agency, Corrective Services NSW, Create NSW, Office of Environment and Heritage NSW, Illawarra, City of Perth, Shoalhaven, Wagga Wagga, Wingecarribee Shire, Wollongong City Councils, NSW, Queensland State Libraries, UNESCO

ENVIRONMENT

Eucalypt Australia, Eden Gardens, Kings Park and Botanic Garden, Royal Botanic Garden and Domain Trust (Sydney, Mount Annan and Mount Tomah Gardens), Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (Cranbourne Gardens), Sydney Olympic Park



Wanda at nighttime Djadjun lights the way.

OUR SUPPORTERS

With thanks to our supporters who enable meaningful poetic projects. Your gift nurtures future generations of Australian poets.

To help others find their voice and create poetic pathways to learning and employment consider making a tax deductible gift to RR.

To donate, contact 02 9319 5090 or visit:

redroomcompany.org/support

KEY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS

Australia Council for the Arts
Create NSW

GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS

Aboriginal Affairs NSW
UNESCO
City of Sydney
Office of Environment & Heritage NSW
City of Perth, Shoalhaven, Wagga Wagga City
and Wingecarribee Shire Councils

MAJOR SPONSORS

Royal Botanic Garden and Domain Trust
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria
Art Gallery of NSW
Lendlease
Mirvac
Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences

*Celebration with poet Lorna Munro
10 week Yala Gavi workshops
with First Nations students at
Alexandria Park Community School.*



KEY SUPPORTERS
(\$100,000+)

Oranges & Sardines Foundation
John B. Fairfax AO

MAJOR SUPPORTERS
(\$25,000 - \$50,000)

Bret Walker sc
Copyright Agency

SUPPORTERS
(\$10,000 - \$25,000)

Ernst Young Foundation
Eucalypt Australia
Graeme Wood Foundation
Nelson Meers Foundation
Tim Game sc

FRIENDS
(\$1000 - \$5000)

Andrew Cameron Family Foundation
Antoinette Albert
Robert Albert AO
Margaret Ann Arnott
Jennifer P Beran
Phillip Boulten sc
Shaneen Crouch
Liz Cuninghame
Sue Cuninghame
Jacq Miguel
Nick Fairfax
Doc Ross Foundation
Andrew FitzSimons
Craig and Joy Lawn
Judith Pini
Paul Ruiz
EFS Foundation

2018 MEDIA

DIGITAL REACH 860,000+

WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS 232,177

FACEBOOK REACH 338,457

TWITTER IMPRESSIONS 296,400

INSTAGRAM REACH 21,289

YOUTUBE 10,420

RADIO, TV, PRINT
& DIGITAL MENTIONS 147



TheWire



ABC TV The Mix



Daily Telegraph



Tumbalong Gatherers light boxes sharing First Nations poems for NAIDOC Week in Darling Square and Darling Quarter.

2018 FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

	NOTES	YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018	YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017
Donations and non-government grants	16	362,725	287,391
Government grants		380,908	332,911
Other revenue	4	93,333	83,081
TOTAL REVENUE		836,966	703,383
Contractors and employee expenses		(478,532)	(379,588)
Poetry commissions and appearance fees		(85,401)	(64,410)
Production costs		(29,034)	(61,672)
Rental expenses		(27,380)	(24,453)
Consumables and office expenses		(6,120)	(9,789)
Publicity and promotion		(94,756)	(68,650)
Accounting and audit		(33,801)	(32,433)
Insurances		(10,284)	(8,726)
Travel costs		(10,096)	(18,790)
Repairs and maintenance		(668)	(627)
Depreciation expenses	9	(2,728)	(2,964)
Other expenses		(4,712)	(3,631)
RESULTS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		53,454	27,650
Financial income	5	12,349	9,705
SURPLUS BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE		65,803	37,355
Income tax expense		-	-
SURPLUS AFTER INCOME TAX EXPENSE		65,803	37,355
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		65,803	37,355

**STATEMENT OF POSITION
AS AT 31 DEC 2018**

	NOTES	YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018	YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	239,220	460,954
Trade and other receivables	8	30,938	63,549
Other financial assets	7	365,116	354,926
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		635,274	879,429
Plant and equipment	9	4,232	6,960
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		4,232	6,960
TOTAL ASSETS		639,506	886,389
LIABILITIES – CURRENT			
Trade and other payables	10	37,245	58,373
Deferred revenue	11	183,626	492,717
Employee entitlements	12	23,910	16,551
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		244,781	567,641
NON-CURRENT			
Employee entitlements	12	10,174	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		10,174	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES		254,955	567,641
NET ASSETS		384,551	318,748
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		384,551	318,748
TOTAL EQUITY		384,551	318,748

RED ROOM POETRY

The Red Room Company
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02 9319 5090
contact@redroomcompany.org
ABN 35 103 464 446

redroomcompany.org

*gather to return grow
keepers skilled with the
keepers of the*

**RED ROOM POETRY CELEBRATES 2019 AS THE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES**