THIS VITAL FORCE, CARRIED IN SKIN AND WITHIN, A GENESIS OF SACRED STORIES YARNS LIKE BLOOD THROUGH OUR VEINS -
BUNADA LANGUAGE

Born of lung, egress to mouth
rounded in hollow caverns,
our subterranean caves.
Tapered tongues, lapping ridges
in glottal patterns depart
parted lips. A vibrating hum.

Bunada Language
This vital force, carried in skin
and within, a genesis of sacred stories
yarns like blood through our veins —
interconnecting
infiltration and percolation,
p precipitating from ancestry.

Bunada Language
These oral waves shape the land
and cascade in auditory
resonant message
enfolding meaning, cradle knowledge
and forge identity
in expressive course across the terrain.

Bunada Language
Rippling outward, perpetual.
A nexus swelling and surging
in celebratory liberation.

Bunada Language

~ Nicole Smede

Gumea Dharawal interpretation provided by Adrian Webster.
Bunada is a Gumea Dharawal word referring to flowing word,
used here to infer the Language Flows Like a River.
OUR STORY

Vision
Red Room Poetry’s vision is to make poetry in meaningful ways.

Impact
Language, poetry and culture are intrinsically linked to the environments and communities that sustain them, that’s why our mission is to nurture excellence in Australian poetry and projects for positive impact across our core areas:

ENVIRONMENT
AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY
FIRST NATIONS
YOUTH
MARGINALISED VOICES

Red Room Poetry is located on Gadigal Country of the Eora Nation. We acknowledge and respect Gadigal Elders and Custodians past, present and emerging. Always was, always will be.

IF YOU CLAMBER BACK ON SHARED LAND,
ALL THE MOMENTS ON EARTH BELONG TO YOU.
~ Richard James Allen, 'The ocean’s lullaby'

RR Fellowship Shortlist
Fellowship workshops at Bundanon Trust
photo by Tad Souden
Since 2003, Red Room Poetry (RR) has grown to be Australia’s leading organisation for commissioning, creating, publishing and promoting poetry in meaningful ways.

RR’s reputation for invention sees us delivering national projects that are unparalleled in their quality, scale, professional payment of poets, partnerships, cultural impact, amplification and engagement of poets, students and audiences of all ages.

Reflecting the diversity of Australian voices, RR commissions and publishes poetry of all styles (page, performance, spoken word, experimental, digital, musical, visual). We develop creative and critical contexts in and beyond literary communities where poetry can be explored across languages, landscapes and mediums to make creative expression widely accessible.

205,000+ students engaged in schools and juvenile justice

21,000+ poems created, published

17 years experience

75+ major projects

240+ cross-sector partners, 9 international

1,090+ poets commissioned and employed

4.3M local, national, international audiences p.a.

2.6M digital reach p.a.

21 correctional centre programs
This Annual Report stands astride a mix of emotions.

It does not matter where I stand. For whether it is drought, bushfires, floods or a pandemic, I feel the solace of words reflecting and inspiring an inner soul; each experience interpreting a feeling and often many varied feelings just as a song can inspire happiness and another, sadness. Just as at a funeral we can be made to laugh and at a wedding to feel sombre. Poetry does all of these things. It allows us the freedom to interpret this changing world around us. It is like the burnt black tree trunk that quickly sprouts virgin growth to defy the wrath of nature.

It is therefore little wonder that I would urge all to be part of poetry, to indulge in the words so carefully crafted and neatly written on a page. Red Room Poetry is the conduit through which we can all share those many emotions, not least, love. To be part of it is to engender contentment.

I can only congratulate our small team of Red Room staff for what they have achieved again this year and thank the many contributors and supporters for recognising we have an organisation for which we can be very proud.

~ John B. Fairfax AO
Patron
FOR A MOMENT, I SEE MYSELF THROUGH YOUR EYES THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS OF FUTURES PAST
~ Jocistics ‘Framed by faded things’ Shadow catchers

Against the tides of headlines and losses, poetry offers an escape hatch. Whether our country is on fire or folded inside fighting a virus, the thousands of poems commissioned and published by Red Room Poetry each year hold seeds of hope. The words written by poets and students shine a light on the labyrinth of language that connects us all, especially during times of isolation.

Throughout 2019 the Red Room Poetry team worked to crystallise our 2020-25 strategy, welcoming highly skilled new members to the team and refreshing our Board with the appointment of the Hon. Michael Pembroke as Chairman. We also celebrated the International Year of Indigenous Languages with our Poetry in First Languages project while leading poetic collaborations with galleries, gardens and communities most in need of creative programs across Australia.

A strength of poetry is its malleability and as 2020 begins we find ourselves shaping response projects that support poets who have lost their launches, audiences and income streams due to the pandemic. Alongside these projects we continue to provide creative opportunities for communities and students to connect, participate and publish poetry in new ways.

As ever, I am deeply grateful to our Patron, our Board, our dedicated team, our poets and all of our supporters, partners and friends who champion the possibilities of poetry to illuminate our future and the looking glass.

~ Dr Tamryn Bennett  
Artistic Director

AS THE BOX OPENS THE SKY REJOICES AND BIRDS GATHER FROM EVERYWHERE
~ Ali Cobby Eckermann, ‘Wind Song Lament’ Extinction Elegies

OUR TEAM

PATRON
John B. Fairfax AO

BOARD
Chair
Hon. Michael Pembroke
Treasurer
Craig Lawn
Secretary
Mary Gillespie
Member
Johanna Featherstone
Member
Andrew FitzSimons
Member
Daryn McKenny
Member
Judy Foster
Observer
Annie Chen

STAFF
Director
Dr Tamryn Bennett
Director External Relations
Sally Marwood
Senior Project Manager
David Stavanger
Senior Project Manager
Anne-Marie Te Whiu
First Nations Programs Manager
Kirli Saunders
Communications and Marketing Coordinator
Amelia Theodorakis
Office Manager
Lorin Reid

FIRST NATIONS ADVISORY COUNCIL
Cultural Mentor
Aunty Trish Levett
Artistic/Poetic Mentor
Jeanine Leanne, Wiradjuri poet and academic
Business Mentor
David Beaumont, Entrepreneur, Community Engagement Coordinator/Creator of Eora Nation Journey for the City of Sydney
Educational Mentor
Anthony McKnight, Aboriginal Education Subject Coordinator University of Wollongong
Language Mentor
Daryn McKenny, Director Miromaa Language Centre

And our dedicated volunteers
EVERY SPECIES IS A WORLD OF SOUND, A SOLID FORM OF SILENCE SAID. A BODY OF THOUGHT.

~ Mark Tredinnick ‘Litany: An Elegy’ Extinction Elegies

2020 POETIC PROGRAM

Supporting poetic excellence through inventive commissions, responsive collaborations and new publications, our 2020 Poetic Program celebrates a diversity of voices across core impact areas:

ENVIRONMENT | AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY | FIRST NATIONS | YOUTH | MARGINALISED VOICES |
SCATTER THE ASHES OF EUCALYPTUS TREES DOWNSTREAM AND DRUM A PULSE BACK INTO THE EARTH

~ Eunice Andrada, ‘answer’ Writing Water

Our major multi-year environmental projects for 2020 include:

**Extinction Elegies**

*Extinction Elegies* deepens exploration, empathy and understanding of extinction, ecology and loss through poetic commissions, public submissions, workshops, radio series and exhibitions with partners Durham University UK, James Cook University, Community Radio Network, Rewilding Australia, and Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney.

**Writing Water: Rain River Reef**

Commissioning five poets and inviting public submissions, *Writing Water* surfaces our relationships with this essential substance. Poetic outcomes include publications on Sydney Ferries and waterways with partners Torch Media, TarraWarra Biennial, Billy Blue Creative, Department of Planning Industry and Environment, Coral Sea Press.

Writing Water posters on ferries
Billy Blue Creative
AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY

RR’s projects increase the value, visibility and access of poetry for all audiences by embedding poetry in public spaces, experimental platforms and everyday experiences.

To elevate Australian poetry locally and internationally, RR is creating *Poetry Month*. Launching in 2021, *Poetry Month* is a national program of high-profile commissions, events, readings, residencies, performances, publications, professional development, awards and community-led activities with major partners.

To see the world through your own face, or, rather, see the face through which you view the world.

~ David Brooks, ‘Snow Country’ Shadow catchers

In Your Hands

**SLIP OFF THE CONCRETE BOOTS OF YOUR DREAMS**

~ Ali Whitelock, ‘The Lactic Acid in the Calves of Your Despair’ *In Your Hands*

Offering a little poetic relief in response to COVID-19, Red Room Poetry collaborated with Oranges & Sardines Foundation to develop *In Your Hands*, a free digital poetry anthology. Promoting poets and publishers, the project paid 80 poets whose book launches and performances were cancelled due to the closure of live events and festivals. *In Your Hands* was launched by live-stream in late April.

Panacea

**CRY TELL-TALE TEARS WHILE UNRAVELLING TALL TALES**

~ Benjamin Laird, *Panacea*

*Panacea* is a participatory poetry experiment coded in collaboration with Benjamin Laird. With no attempt to transmute metal into gold, through the alchemy of poetic coding and collective responses -- spreading seven words and up to seven lines at a time – *Panacea* branches into the possibilities of poetic connectivity during a pandemic.

Poetic Moments

*Poetic Moments* amplifies poetic commissions and accessibility of all RR projects via unexpected, highly visible installations, publications and exhibitions. From buses, billboards and broadcasts to ferries, walkways and water tanks, we publish and profile poetry for enhanced cultural placemaking.

POETIC MOMENTS OUTCOMES:

- **Writing Water: Rain River Reef** - poems on ferries with public call out for Chapbook
- **Shadow catchers** - six poets creating new works responding to the photographic collection and exhibition at AGNSW
- **Poetry on the Block** - urban poetry on hoardings with City of Sydney featuring commissioned and student poems with designs by Billy Blue
- **Floregium exhibition** - Gadigal student poems exhibited at Royal Botanic Garden Sydney
- **Gundungurra student poems** on Illawarra signs with Transport NSW
- **Poetry Object** etched installation of student poetry at Barangaroo

To elevate Australian poetry locally and internationally, RR is creating *Poetry Month*. Launching in 2021, *Poetry Month* is a national program of high-profile commissions, events, readings, residencies, performances, publications, professional development, awards and community-led activities with major partners.

~ David Brooks, ‘Snow Country’ Shadow catchers

Poetry on the Block hoardings with Billy Blue Creative
Our 2020 Fellow, Michelle Cahill, was selected from over 30 entries. Michelle’s Fellowship project is a poetic reflection on the impact of colonialism, species hierarchy and climate emergencies following the Australian bush fires. The creation of a new suite of poems will extend her work within *Extinction Elegies*.

**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

Given the calibre of Fellowship submissions, nine shortlisted poets have also been commissioned to create new poems aligned with themes of their individual projects.

The Fellowship is made possible by generous individuals and Bundanon Trust.

“It is a privilege to walk in the steps of Ali Cobby Eckermann, Candy Royalle and Jeanine Leane; and to be in the company of nine extraordinary Australian poets, whose work I admire. This comes as a lifeline to me, at a time when the freedom to think as a poet is challenged by external restrictions and the world we know and love is rapidly changing.”

~ Michelle Cahill

Michelle Cahill
photo by Nicola Bailey
Fellowship workshops at Bundanon Trust
photo by Tad Souden
Our First Nations programs celebrate, share and conserve knowledge of First languages and culture through poetry, music, dance and art.

Connecting Elders, Custodians and young people, our programs are supported by RR’s “First Nations Advisory Council and key partners including Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Aboriginal Educational Consultative Groups, Ades Foundation, Copyright Agency, Local Councils, DPIE, Miromaa Language Centre, NASCA, Nelson Meers Foundation, Magabala Books, Oranges & Sardines Foundation, “Writers Festivals nationally, Reconciliation Australia and NSW.

Poetry in First Languages (PIFL)


“The poetry element of the program is so so good for us to heal and grow. The process of creative writing allows us to reflect on our past experiences, we can connect with each over our shared histories and draw strength.”

~ Ethan Bell, PIFL Dharawal-based Ngunawal Gamilaraay poet

GUWAYU – For All Times

GUWAYU – For All Times is a collection of First Nations poetry commissioned by RR and edited with Wiradjuri poet and academic Dr Jeanine Leane. Published in collaboration with Magabala Books, GUWAYU launches in 2020 and features 36 First Nations poets, 12 First Nations languages and 61 poems that champion First Nations voices.

“The Australian literary landscape needs this bold, brave intervention to wake it up from the 232-year slumber and the dream of the settler mythscape. GUWAYU breaks the silence—feel the beauty—hear our words.”

~ Dr Jeanine Leane
**YOUTH**

**Youth Unlocked**
Youth Unlocked programs with juvenile justice and behavioural intervention centres engage high need participants from Wagga Wagga to Western Sydney with partners Aesop and Oranges & Sardines Foundations.

**Poetry Object**
Poetry Object, RR’s national competition, is partnering with Copyright Agency and Reading Australia to reach new audiences, enrich prizes and opportunities linked to Poetry Month 2021.

**Poetry in First Languages**
Poetry in First Languages supports students to deepen connections with culture, Country, nature and language learning through poetry.

**New Shoots and Extinction Elegies**
New Shoots and Extinction Elegies enrich eco-poetics for students and teachers through workshops and professional development at Royal Botanic Gardens across NSW and VIC.

**IN THE FUTURE**
**THE LINES ON MY HANDS**
**WILL BE A RIVER FLOWING**
**TO THE OCEAN.**

~ Kyre, Year 8, Coreen School, Youth Unlocked

“Students who participated in this program were highly motivated and we saw an increase of attendance on those days. As a school we saw huge benefits for our students... I would love to see this program running for longer in our school. The creativity and writing the students were producing was the best I have ever seen in my 10 years of working in SSP schools.”

~ Timothy Lorking, Assistant Principal, Coreen School, Western Sydney
WITH A GULP OF COMPLIANCE I CHEEK THE SEDATIVE SO THAT I CAN SPEND ONE MORE SECOND TRYING TO DECIPHER WHAT THEY SAY. I AM HERE, NOW I DECIDE TO STAY.

~ Caitlin Kozman, MAD Poetry

MAD Poetry
Encouraging poetic expression and connection for people with lived/living experiences of mental illness. Through workshops, publications and performances, the focus is on creating new spaces for emerging voices with a lived/living experience to express how they see the world. 20+ participants

Studio A
Collaboration with 15 artists with a disability and five poets to deliver intimate workshops and create a series of commissioned poems for exhibition at the NSW Coal Loader with support from the Oranges & Sardines Foundation.

Grand Slam!
A performance poetry initiative for emerging poets aged 65+ to dismantle stereotypes of aging and amplify older voices in poetic spaces via a series of digital workshops and online publication opportunities in collaboration with Everybody Now!

Sweatshop in a Red Room
A collaboration with Sweatshop commissioning six poets to create and publish new works examining Western Sydney slang for wider audiences.

OUR 2020 PROGRAM INCLUDES:

Co-production of community-led projects to commission and mentor 35+ poets with disabilities, lived experiences of mental health as well as supporting LGBTQI, culturally diverse, regional and older voices via commissions, face to face and digital workshops, performances, exhibition and publication outcomes.

MARGINALISED VOICES
A DIVERSITY OF POETS

100+ POETS are commissioned annually spanning diverse voices, styles, landscapes and languages. Our community of 1090+ poets continues to grow.

Christine Afoa NSW
Richard James Allen NSW
Eunice Andrada NSW
Evelyn Araluen VIC
David Astle VIC

Eric Avery NSW
Maryam Azam NSW
Emilie Zoey Baker VIC
Ethan Bell NSW
Stuart Barnes QLD
Tamryn Bennett NSW
Tony Birch VIC
Susan Bradley Smith WA
CJ Bowerbird ACT
David Brooks NSW
John ‘Muk Muk’ Burke NSW
Pascalle Burton QLD
Michelle Cahill NSW
Nandi Chinna WA
Claire G Coleman VIC

Paul Collis ACT
Stuart Cooke QLD
Arielle Cottingham TAS
Luke Davies NSW
Tricia Dearborn NSW

Gloria Demillo NSW
Ali Cobby Eckermann SA
Emily Crocker NSW
Joel Davison NSW
Pola Fanous NSW
Michael Farrell VIC
Luke Fischer NSW
Toby Fitch NSW
Lionel Fogarty NSW
Zenobia Frost QLD
Brian Fuata NSW
Declan Furber Gillick VIC
Allison Gallagher NSW
Nikki Gemmell NSW
Lisa Gorton VIC

Daniel Hansen WA
Matthew Heffernan NT
Steve Bibirdi Hodder-Watt
Bunbajee QLD
Yvette Holt NT
Eleanor Jackson VIC
Joelistics VIC
Gabrielle Jones NSW
Jill Jones SA
Gayle Kennedy NSW
Meyrnah Khodr NSW
John Kinsella WA
Benjamin Laird VIC

Jeanine Leane VIC
Carissa Lee Godwin VIC
Allison Gallagher NSW
Jacqui Malins ACT
Abeny Mayol NSW
Mark Mariano NSW
Lola McKickett WA
Tina Matthews NSW

Courtney Sina Meredith NZ
Scott-Patrick Mitchell WA
Jacob Morris NSW
Lorna Munro NSW
Melanie Mununggurr-Williams NT
Anisa Nandaula QLD
Maureen O’Keefe SA
Bruce Pascoe VIC
Nick Paton NSW
Renee Pettite-Schipp WA
Ryan Prehn VIC
Jennine Primmer NSW

Kirli Saunders NSW
Mel Senter NSW
Christine Shamista NSW
Nardi Simpson WA
Nicole Smede NSW
Melinda Smith ACT
Zech Soakai NZ
Emma Rose Smith NSW
David Stavanger NSW
Kryton Stewart NSW
Luke Sweedman WA
Maureen Ten NSW
Anne-Marie Te Whiu NSW

Sam Wagan Watson QLD
Adrian Webster NSW
Kaitlen Wellington NSW
Ali Whitlock NSW

Jessica L. Wilkinson VIC
Emily Wurramara NT
Elliot York Cameron NSW

Tayi Tibble NZ
Mark Tredinnick NSW

Ellen van Neerven QLD
Saba Vasefi NSW
Lyndsay Urquhart NSW
EVERY SPECIES IS A WORLD OF SOUND, A SOLID FORM OF SILENCE SAID. A BODY OF THOUGHT.

~ Mark Tredinnick ‘Litany: An Elegy’ Extinction Elegies

Kew Gardens London
photo by Tamryn Bennett

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS |
POETIC PROJECTS |
Poetry in First Languages
Extinction Elegies
New Shoots
Poetic Moments
Red Room Poetry Fellowship

POETIC LEARNING |
Poetry Object
Youth Unlocked

Our Supporters
Media
Financials
2019 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

WHERE I COME FROM THERE IS AN ARCHITECTURE NOT OF BUILDINGS BUT OF THE SKY
~ Nikki Gemmel, ‘Pivot’ Poetry on the Block

During 2019, the International Year of Indigenous Languages, RR focussed on First Nations led projects including Poetry in First Languages and Guwayu - For All Times an anthology featuring commissioned work by 36 First Nations poets and 12 different languages.

We cultivated opportunities for poetic creation and participation through inventive projects with national cross-sector partnerships. Project outcomes spanned poetry on boardwalks, busbacks, plant tags, exhibition labels, in rivers and zoos, garnering new audiences and increasing poetic visibility across Australia.

“During 2019, the International Year of Indigenous Languages, RR focussed on First Nations led projects including Poetry in First Languages and Guwayu - For All Times an anthology featuring commissioned work by 36 First Nations poets and 12 different languages.

We cultivated opportunities for poetic creation and participation through inventive projects with national cross-sector partnerships. Project outcomes spanned poetry on boardwalks, busbacks, plant tags, exhibition labels, in rivers and zoos, garnering new audiences and increasing poetic visibility across Australia.”

~ Nikki Gemmel, ‘Pivot’ Poetry on the Block

4.3M
local, national, international audiences p.a.

2.6M
digital reach

73+
First Nations artists and Language Custodians employed

90+
partners

135+
poets employed, commissioned, published and performing

7350
students actively creating

2595
public poem submissions

179
events

“We are absolutely thrilled with the whole Punchlines: Poets Play Duchamp project—the cheeky labels, the entertaining performance and the publication (and the fourth manifestation to come—recordings and poems online). I think it was one of the most delightful and surprising projects we’ve worked on. As with last year’s Poetic Threads, the poets brought fresh insight to the works while reflecting deep thinking about Duchamp, his approach to art and his persona. We’ve received incredible feedback… Bravo to you – Thank you once again for your vision, creativity and enthusiasm on another outstanding art/poetry partnership.”

~ Josephine Touma, Public Programs AGNSW

Punchlines: Poets Play Duchamp

New Shoots WA poets perform in Kings Park Poetry Trail as part of Perth Festival photo by Jason Thomas
Through imaginative projects and community-led programs, RR reframes critical and creative engagement with poetry. We provide poets, students and their communities with active and authentic opportunities to create and share poems as well as supporting pathways to employment, professional development and wellbeing.

Our key projects of 2019 include:

- **POETRY IN FIRST LANGUAGES**
- **EXTINCTION ELEGIES**
- **NEW SHOOTS**
- **POETIC MOMENTS**
- **RED ROOM POETRY FELLOWSHIP**
FIRST NATIONS

Poetry in First Languages

Poetry in First Languages (PIFL) aims to promote pride and self-expression in healing ways to support participants to learn their languages with Elders, Custodians and community on Country. Celebrating the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, PIFL played a major role in language sharing and poetic creation.

RR’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was selected for the RAP Impact Measurement Report as a case study to inspire other organisations to implement meaningful reconciliation plans.

For full list of partners see p. 51

BAHLOO
I HAVE TURNED ROUND THE SUN
AND TURNED IN TO YOU
AND LEFT AS MUCH OF MY BLOOD IN
THE SOIL
AS MY BLOOD IS THE SOIL

~ Evelyn Araluen, ‘Bahloo’ Poetry in First Languages

395
First Nations students engaged

39
workshops delivered nationally

64
poems commissioned and republished in 11 languages

50+
employment opportunities created

200,000+
community members reached via performances, festivals, publications on buses, trains and murals

116
student poems published in 6 languages

30+
generous partners and supporters

“IT was a pleasure to spend the day amongst such talented artists (Ethan Bell and Nicole Smede) and to watch the boys feel so connected to their culture. Being a part of these experiences means so much to our kids and will play a large part in shaping their identity. I hope they can continue to partake in these opportunities on a regular basis.”

~ Alicia O’Connor, Teacher, Figtree Public School

Poetry in First Languages Arrernte NT workshops
photo by Fiona Dorrell

36
Red Room Poetry

2019 Annual Report

37
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

### Extinction Elegies

**Extinction Elegies** is a series of poetic commissions, performances, publications and recordings that deepen awareness and empathy with endangered and extinct species.

In collaboration with Durham Centre for Cultural Ecologies (Durham University), we commissioned six Australian poets to create and record new elegies for endangered Australian species. John Kinsella lamented the loss of the Christmas Island Pipistrelle, Michelle Cahill the King Island Emu, and Bruce Pascoe the Azure Kingfisher. Together with poems by Ali Cobby Eckermann, Mark Tredinnick and Stuart Cooke, these elegies remind us how human life is intertwined with all life on earth.

In awareness of Australia’s 300+ threatened animals and plants, we also invited public submissions, with $1 for every poem donated to Rewilding Australia to support wildlife restoration programs.

For full list of partners see p. 51

### New Shoots: Garden of Poems

**New Shoots** is a poetic project that connects people, plants and place to cultivate connections with nature. Growing the garden of poems across Australia, commissioned poems are now embedded in botanic gardens across NSW, VIC, QLD and WA.

With support from the City of Perth, Western Australian poets created and recorded new poems responding to local mallee species, sites and ecosystems. As part of Perth Writers Week and Festival in February 2019, our poets performed and led poetic trails round Kings Park and Botanic Garden. Mallee-inspired poems were also exhibited in the Kings Park Festival in September.

“The experience was one of my best and definitely my favourite of the whole writer’s festival. To be in touch with those lovely mallee trees was pretty special and the four poets were all unique in style but equal in passion for their subject. I felt totally connected with nature and poems as one.”

~ Wendy Birrell New Shoots WA event participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>250</th>
<th>public poetic submissions on Australia’s 300 threatened species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>part radio series created and broadcast with Community Radio Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>poets commissioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 international partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.85M</td>
<td>audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>poems published, 3 poets commissioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poetic Moments elevates the visibility and accessibility of contemporary Australian poetry through cultural placemaking with poetic publication in unexpected spaces from mangrove boardwalks to parks, zoos, hoardings, trains and ferries.

Embracing multiple languages, experimental platforms and artforms, Poetic Moments creates opportunities for all audiences to engage via provocations and partnerships that connect people and place through poetry.

Poetic Moments outcomes:

Poetry in First Languages
Gundungurra student poems on Southern Highlands, NSW busses First Nations poetry on trains with poems by Joel Davison and Jeanine Leane.

Extinction Elegies
Poems on trains with public call out.

Kaalak Minditj
Kaalak, Home Sick Home
Exhibition at Art Gallery WA with Lola McKickett’s poems on digital screens.

MUSE at Taronga Zoo
Outdoor exhibition featuring poetry by Joel Davison and Ali Cobby Eckermann inspired by NAIDOC Week Voice, Treaty Truth.

Muru Nanga Mai
Poem etched on Badu Mangrove Boardwalk at Sydney Olympic Park.

New Shoots WA
Poems embedded in parklands as part of the Kings Park & Botanic Garden Spring Festival, Perth.

Punchlines: Poets Play Duchamp
At AGNSW with poetic performance, labels and crossword in the exhibition.

“Our collaboration with Red Room Poetry has allowed us to move beyond a purely European ‘didactic panel’ approach to site interpretation, and to enhance a wonderful piece of infrastructure—the new Badu Mangroves Boardwalk—through a poetic re-visioning of this extraordinary space.”

~ Tony Nesbitt, Manager, Arts and Culture, Sydney Olympic Park

From top: Muru Nanga Mai poem etched at Sydney Olympic Park photo by Joanne Kinniburgh, Punchlines at AGNSW photo by Christopher Snee

TO CRACK A SMILE IS AN ADMISSION OF GUILT TO THAT VERY SERIOUS CRIME OF BEING ALIVE

~ Allison Gallagher, 'Portrait no. 29’ Punchlines: Poets Play Duchamp
Following in the footsteps of Ali Cobby Eckermann and Candy Royalle, Dr Jeanine Leane was our 2019 Fellow.

During an intensive creative residency at Bundanon Trust, Jeanine developed over 10 new poems that unravel the colonial mythscape of Australia. A series of workshops with local schools and new recordings also engaged young people with Jeanine’s work.

2019 shortlisted poets were also offered commissions including Richard James Allen, Maryam Azam, Susan Bradley Smith, Tricia Dearborn, Michael Farrell, Caitlin Maling, Sarah Rice, David Stavanger and Mark Tredinnick.

The Fellowship is made possible with the support of generous individuals and Bundanon Trust.

“Jeanine Leane is an amazing writer, teacher and poet with well-considered and researched perspectives. She worked with gentle firmness to encourage our students to express themselves through writing poetry and broaden their understanding of the world they live in. I loved how the theme of Mythscape and Understory really connected the young people to the past and present landscapes.”

~ Mary Preece, Education Manager, Bundanon Trust

“There is a sense of belonging to the land that is both a reclamation and a celebration of the Locals of this land. It is a project that seeks to find connection and meaning in the land and the people through art and poetry.”

~ Jeanine Leane, RR Fellow

10 poets commissioned
33 poems published
59 First Nations students engaged in intensive workshops

Jeanine delivering workshops at Bundanon Trust
photo by Tad Souden

Jeanine Leane
photo by Tad Souden
If I had the body of a puppy I’d keep coming back as different dogs that could talk. If I was a dog that could talk I would tell every dog to shut up. I would tell them by growling, biting, scratching with my paws. I’d tell Nan it wasn’t her fault and I would go to sleep next to her bed.

~ Andrew, ‘If I had a body’, Coreen School, Youth Unlocked

Nikki Gemmel and Richard James Allen stirred the hearts of budding writers by sharing their experiences, their writing methods and their reasons for writing. They encouraged students to take risks in their writing, while praising their endeavours as students produced city themed poems. I am grateful for the opportunity to watch all involved delight in and celebrate writing as a transformative experience.

~ Emily Buchanan, Teacher St Andrews Cathedral School, Poetry on the Block

All RR projects have embedded learning programs for young people, with a focus on collaboration with marginalised communities and employment of local poets.

Through face to face and digital delivery we bring contemporary poets into classrooms and on Country across Australia to lead intensive writing workshops that awaken imaginations and cultivate creative opportunities.

In 2019, RR’s key Poetic Learning programs, Poetry Object and Youth Unlocked, inspired students and teachers to create, perform and publish poetry. A range of accredited professional development workshops and resources created in partnership with the Australian Association for the Teaching of English and ClickView further supported RR’s meaningful delivery of Poetic Learning programs.

5476 students and teachers actively engaged
259 school communities engaged nationally, 76% regional and remote
196 workshops, performances, events
16 professional development programs

“Nikki Gemmel and Richard James Allen stirred the hearts of budding writers by sharing their experiences, their writing methods and their reasons for writing. They encouraged students to take risks in their writing, while praising their endeavours as students produced city themed poems. I am grateful for the opportunity to watch all involved delight in and celebrate writing as a transformative experience.”

~ Emily Buchanan, Teacher St Andrews Cathedral School, Poetry on the Block

“The poetry workshop experience was incredible. It made learning a fun and good experience. At the start of the workshop I didn’t like poetry but going through the workshop has definitely changed my mind about poetry for the good.”

~ Maia, Year 7, Silkwood School
POETRY OBJECT

Poetry Object is Australasia’s largest free national poetry competition for students (Years 3 -10) and their teachers.

Since 2011, Poetry Object has inspired the creation and publication of 17,500+ student and teacher poems about talismanic and treasured objects. Free curriculum aligned learning resources and workshops further enrich the competition and creation of new poems.

In 2019, celebrated performance poet Emilie Zoey Baker judged Poetry Object with winners sharing in $10,000 worth of prizes.

WHAT YOU REMEMBER MOST IS THE FEELING OF RAIN THAT MIRACULOUS, ECSTATIC INSTANT WHEN YOU BURST FORTH INTO A WET SKY YOUR EYES CLOSED, MEDITATING TO THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES.

~ Lucia, Year 9, ‘Broken Umbrella’ Poetry Object Winner

2349 student poems published
18 poets commissioned and employed
30 workshops with 623 students

240 school communities engaged across Australia and NZ
4 professional development programs
2 multi-media installations

“Students were free to capture a piece of their world and that was a beautiful thing to see. It is often an opportunity to see some students stand out on the page - some who aren’t always the loudest in class or the ones who are always an A+ student.”

~ Peter Ramm, Teacher, Cedars Christian College

“Yudi Gunyi School had the privilege of working with a number of poets from Red Room Poetry. They have all worked passionately and sensitively to engage our students helping them to realise their own creativity. Collaborating with Red Room has not only been an important part of our creative arts program, it has also inspired teachers to develop their own practice. We value our ongoing relationship with Red Room Poetry.”

~ Sarah Travis, Assistant Principal, Yudi Gunyi School, Waterloo

For full list of partners see p. 51
Led by poet educators, Kirli Saunders and David Stavanger, the 2019 Youth Unlocked pilot programs at Coreen School and Green Square Behavioural Intervention School focussed on intensive poetic workshops with small groups of students.

Themes of community, belonging, futures and connection were explored through poetry, performance and art making. Multi-disciplinary Koori artist, David Cragg also collaborated to turn student poems into murals at Coreen School.

For full list of partners see p. 51

~ Group poem, Green Square Behavioural School, Youth Unlocked

“I AM A SKYLINE,
MATTE BLACK
AND MATTE BLUE

~ Group poem, Green Square Behavioural School, Youth Unlocked

David Cragg’s mural with student poetry at Coreen School for Youth Unlocked photo courtesy of the School

“Meeting these young poets and writers is a privilege. Getting to talk about their worlds somewhere near their terms is a gift. Much gratitude to the Green Square students and staff for allowing me into their space. Thank you for giving permission to create these lines as an aside to the main game.”

~ David Stavanger, Poet, Youth Unlocked

259 contact hours
17 students, 2 school communities
2 murals
The Red Room Poetry team give heartfelt thanks to our valuable supporters and partners who help make poetry meaningful, strengthen communities and nurture new voices.

PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS
John B. Fairfax AO
Bret Walker SC

KEY SUPPORTERS
Robert Albert AO
Tim Game SC

SUPPORTERS
Antoinette Albert
Margaret Ann Arnott
Eric Avery
Paula Bennett
Jennifer P Beran
Tony Birch
Phillip Boulten SC
Corban & Blair
Shaneen Crouch
Liz Cuninghame
Stc Cuninghame
Nick Fairfax
Andrew FitzSimons
Ian Gibbins
Kerry Reed-Gilbert
Daniel Howard
Benjamin Laird
Craig and Joy Lawn
Kate Matcham
Newtown Public School
Hon. Michael Pembroke
Judith Pini
Paul Ruiz
Annalise Thomas
Phoebe Wallace
Kerryn Whiteside
Hamish J Wood

PRINCIPAL FOUNDATION
Oranges & Sardines Foundation

KEY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS
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City of Perth
City of Sydney
Department of Education, NSW
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment, NSW
Justice NSW
Landcom
Transport NSW
Wingecarribee Shire Council

PRINCIPAL FOUNDATIONS
Aesop Foundation
Ades Foundation
Copyright Agency
Doc Ross Foundation
Eucalypt Australia
Graeme Wood Foundation
McLean Foundation
Nelson Meers Foundation

CULTURE
Artsbank, Australian Design Centre, Australian Poetry, Art Gallery of NSW, Bankstown Arts Centre & Poetry Slam, Billy Blue Creative, Booranga Writers Centre, Bundanon Trust, Digital Writers’ Festival, EcoSlam Melbourne, Enough Said Poetry Slam, Litfest, Magabala Books, Melbourne Writers Festival, Merrigong Theatre Company, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, National Gallery of Australia, National Museum of Australia, Northern Rivers Arts Centre, NT Writers’ Centre, NT Writers Festival, NZ Poetry Day, Perth Festival, 107 Projects, Queensland Poetry Festival, Sculpture by the Sea, South Coast Writers Centre, State Library NSW, State Library Queensland, Sweatshop, Sydney Writers’ Festival, Taronga Zoo, Unspoken Words, Urban Theatre Projects, Young Writers Festival, Wollongong Art Gallery, Word in Hand, Writing NSW

EDUCATION
Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups
AIME, Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, Billy Blue College of Design, Centre for the History of Emotions, Durham University, English Teacher Associations nationally, Miromaa Language & Technology Centre, National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy, National Education Standards Authority Accreditation, QUT, Reconciliation Australia and NSW, Department of Education and school communities and libraries nationally, U MELB, UNSW, UOW, USYD, UTS, WSU

CORPORATE
American Express, Corban & Blair, Generate, LendLease, Magabala Books, Mirvac, PwC, Regional Express Airlines, Val Morgan

MEDIA

ENVIRONMENT
Eucalypt Australia, Kew Gardens, London, Kings Park and Botanic Garden Perth, Rewilding Australia, Royal Botanic Garden and Domain Trust (Sydney, Mount Annan and Mount Tomah Gardens), Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria ( Cranbourne Gardens), Sydney Olympic Park Authority
Once-sleeping languages are waking up to poetry

If your name is Bob and you’re fed of crosswords, then step reading now. To shorten the odds, if you’re a word-wrangling Bob with a significant birthday on the horizon then every year. Take in the funny cartoon, the headline, the first page – anywhere but where this column is heading.

Because I’ve been asked to decorate your cake. Eventually. Not in a baker way, heaven forbid. Authors have your details in my keeping – your dog and job, your kids and middle name. Everything I need to convert your letters into a clue, ready to be piped in sweet icing on the day.

So why not? Those letters and the droll hints will embellish Our tray. addictive niche across your candids. Which isn’t a bad rule for writers to keep

MEDIA

AUDIENCES
7.1M+

DIGITAL REACH
2.6M+

WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS
332,092 +30%

FACEBOOK REACH
254,100 -24%

TWITTER IMPRESSIONS
377,000 +28%

INSTAGRAM REACH
66,800 +213%

YOUTUBE
34,341 +168%

RADIO, TV, PRINT AND DIGITAL MENTIONS
158 +61%

PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS OF POEMS
2595
## FINANCIALS

### STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Year ended 31 December 2019 $</th>
<th>Year ended 31 December 2018 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Donations and non-government grants</td>
<td>334,001</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government grants</td>
<td>348,059</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other revenue</td>
<td>4,936,88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>775,728</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contractors and employee expenses</td>
<td>(494,146)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poetry commissions and appearance fees</td>
<td>(94,011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Production costs</td>
<td>(25,358)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rental expenses</td>
<td>(20,047)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumables and office expenses</td>
<td>(15,541)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Publicity and promotion</td>
<td>(39,619)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accounting and audit</td>
<td>(10,936)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel costs</td>
<td>(10,120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repairs and maintenance</td>
<td>(671)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depreciation expenses</td>
<td>(13,931)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other expenses</td>
<td>(5,142)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Results from operating activities</strong></td>
<td>30,684</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Financial income</strong></td>
<td>8,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Surplus before income tax expense</strong></td>
<td>38,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Income tax expense</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Surplus after income tax expense</strong></td>
<td>38,830</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total comprehensive income for the year</strong></td>
<td>38,830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statement of comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial report set out on pages 11 to 18 of the full financial statements. Available on request.

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>As at 31 December 2019 $</th>
<th>As at 31 December 2018 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assets: Current</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other financial assets</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>778,971</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assets: Non-Current</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plant and equipment</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right-of-use assets</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total non-current assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>57,907</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>836,878</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liabilities: Current</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trade and other payables</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employee entitlements</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lease liabilities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>375,161</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liabilities: Non-Current</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employee entitlements</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lease liabilities</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total non-current liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,336</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>413,497</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>423,381</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accumulated surplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total equity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statement of financial position is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial report set out on pages 11 to 18 of the full financial statements. Available on request.
WE MAKE POETRY MEANINGFUL.
WE STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES.
WE SHARE NEW VOICES.