

# SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL



# LIVE & LOCAL

FREE event

Live streamed to Orange Regional Gallery  
149 Byng Street

Bookings are essential

Eventbrite.com.au or telephone 6393 8132

## 23-26 MAY



## THURSDAY 23 MAY

All times are AEST\*

10-11AM	JULIA BAIRD: <i>BRIGHT SHINING</i>
12-1PM	VIET THANH NGUYEN: <i>A MAN OF TWO FACES</i>
2-3PM	SUZIE MILLER: <i>PRIMA FACIE</i>
4-5PM	JULIAN BORGER: <i>I SEEK A KIND PERSON</i>

## FRIDAY 24 MAY

10-11AM	A.C. GRAYLING: <i>THE MEANING OF LIFE IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE</i>
12-1PM	THE WAR ON JOURNALISTS
2-3PM	ABDULRAZAK GURNAH: <i>AFTERLIVES</i>
4-5PM	FEMINIST FIREBRANDS

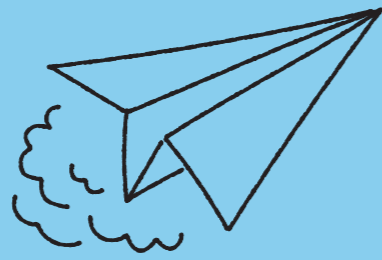
## SATURDAY 25 MAY

10-11AM	CELESTE NG: <i>OUR MISSING HEARTS</i>
12-1PM	TRENT DALTON: <i>FROM ELI TO LOLA</i>
2-3PM	STORYTELLERS: LEIGH SALES AND LISA MILLAR
4-5PM	KATY HESSEL: <i>THE STORY OF ART WITHOUT MEN</i>

## SUNDAY 26 MAY

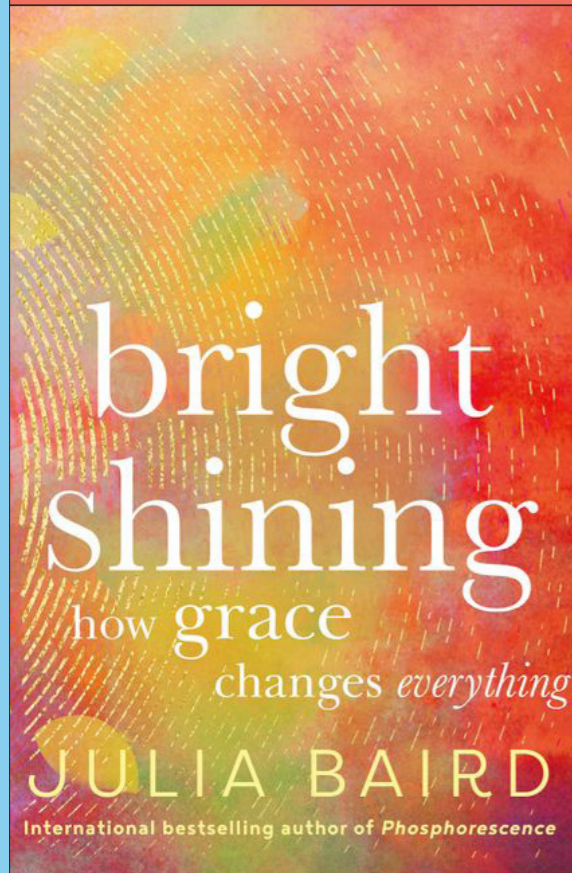
10-11AM	BARRIE CASSIDY AND FRIENDS: <i>STATE OF THE NATION</i>
11.30AM-12.30PM	PLAY LIKE A GIRL
1.30-2.30PM	DAVID WENGROW: <i>THE DAWN OF EVERYTHING</i>
3.30-4.30PM	DARK TECHNOLOGIES

# SYDNEY



# WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10-11AM



## JULIA BAIRD: *BRIGHT SHINING*

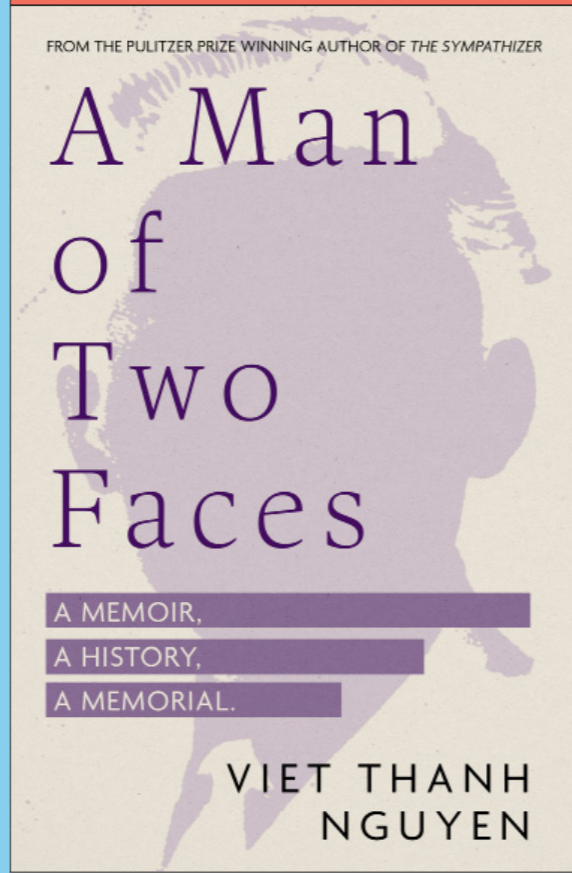
Nurturing grace, even in the darkest of times

Following broadcaster and author Julia Baird's multi-award-winning international bestseller, *Phosphorescence*, comes a beautiful and timely exploration of that most mysterious but necessary human quality: grace.

*Bright Shining*: How grace changes everything asks what grace looks like today, how we recognise it, nurture it within ourselves and express it. For Julia, grace can be found by being kinder, bigger and better with each other.

Sit down with Julia to discuss this luminous work, which *The Guardian* described as "a book the world needs now". In conversation with journalist Jacqueline Maley.

12-1PM



## VIET THANH NGUYEN: *A MAN OF TWO FACES*

Tragicomic memoir from Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sympathizer*

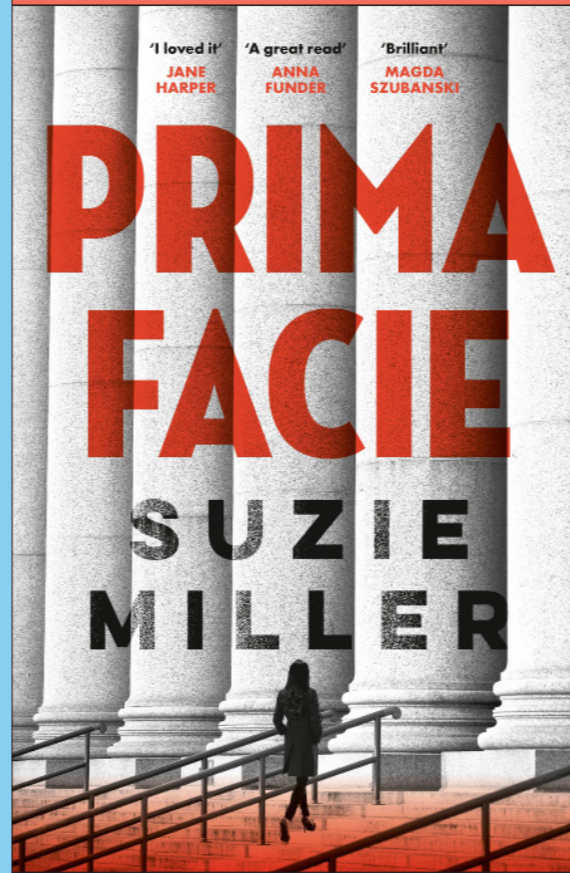
"I am a spy, a sleeper, a spook, a man of two faces", begins Viet Thanh Nguyen's debut novel, *The Sympathizer*, the internationally acclaimed bestseller that was recently adapted into an HBO series starring Sandra Oh and Robert Downey Jr.

This duality is also at the heart of Viet's highly original memoir, *A Man of Two Faces*, which details with sardonic wit and incisive analysis the double consciousness of a Vietnamese refugee growing up in North America.

Listen to the celebrated author, hailed as "a conscience of American literature" (*The New Yorker*), in conversation with Benjamin Law.

Viet Thanh Nguyen appears thanks to the support of Fiona and Matthew Playfair.

2-3PM



## SUZIE MILLER: *PRIMA FACIE*

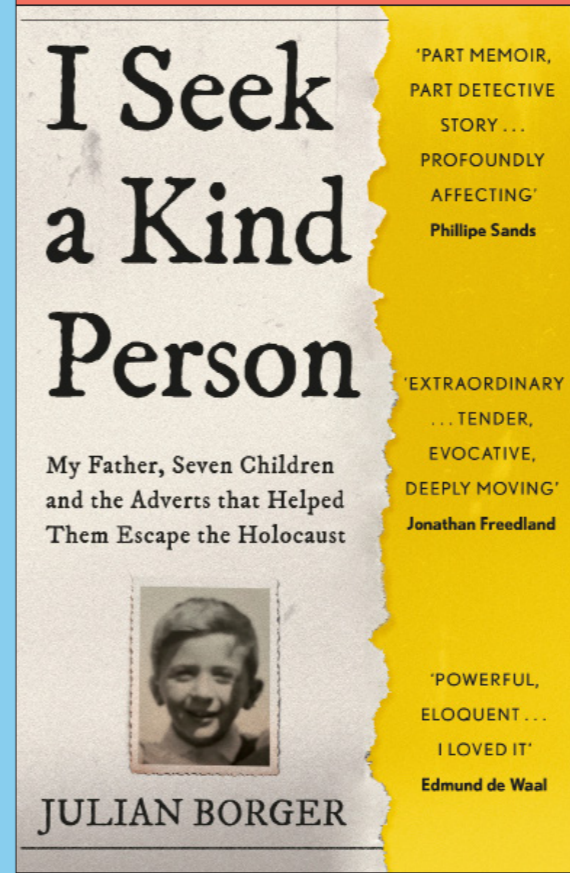
Suzie Miller's disturbingly prescient play, *Prima Facie*, dramatises the price sexual assault victims pay for speaking out.

This blistering one-woman show wowed audiences on Broadway and the West End, winning Suzie an Olivier Award and *Killing Eve* favourite Jodie Comer a Tony for her performance as the brilliant young barrister who, one sickening night, finds herself thrust into the flawed justice system.

Put the courts on trial with Suzie and writer and podcaster Nicole Abadee, as they discuss *Prima Facie*'s adaptation into a gripping novel and screenplay set to star Cynthia Erivo.

Supported by UNSW Sydney.

4-5PM



## JULIAN BORGER: *I SEEK A KIND PERSON*

An enthralling memoir of family history and the Holocaust's resonance through generations

"I seek a kind person who will educate my intelligent boy, aged 11."

This extraordinary 1938 personal advertisement is the starting point for Julian Borger's quest to understand his father's past.

An enthralling memoir, family history and detective story all in one, Borger brings to life in vivid detail the Holocaust escape stories of a handful of children and families, and traces the resonance of these events through generations.

Supported by ARA.

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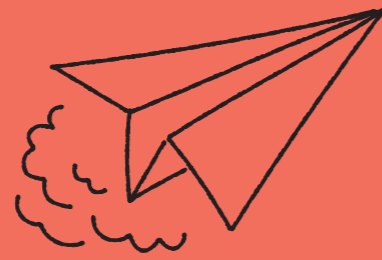
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# THURSDAY 23 MAY

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# WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10-11AM



## A.C. GRAYLING: THE MEANING OF LIFE IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

Finding answers in changing times

"It shouldn't be the business of a philosopher today to tell people what to think", says A. C. Grayling, but rather "how to think".

The quest for a life worth living has been the business of philosophers for millennia. How can we pursue answers to life's big questions in a world that feels increasingly dangerous and unstable thanks to big tech and AI?

Unpack the 'how' in this unmissable talk from the pre-eminent philosopher, who returns to Australia following his sell-out public lectures last year.

12-1PM



## THE WAR ON JOURNALISTS

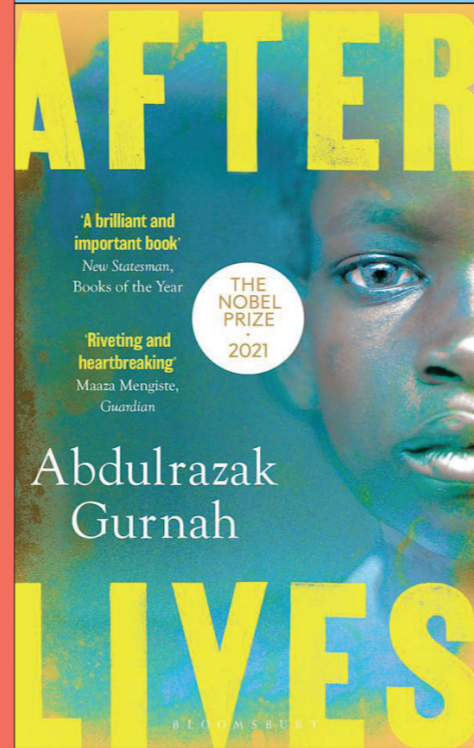
News from the frontlines

War correspondent Marie Colvin stated: "It has always seemed to me that what I write about is humanity in extremis, pushed to the unendurable, and that it is important to tell people what really happens in wars."

With conflict continuing in Ukraine, and the death toll of journalists in the Gaza conflict reaching alarming proportions, we look at the role of journalists in war – on and off the frontlines – and how vital the protection of journalists is to news we can trust about the realities of war.

Join us to hear from those with firsthand experience from the most conflict-ridden parts of the world: Global Affairs Editor for the ABC, John Lyons, *The Guardian* World Affairs Editor, Julian Borger and Ukrainian journalist Alisa Sopova of the 5km From the Frontline project. In conversation with journalist and broadcaster Hamish Macdonald.

2-3PM



## ABDULRAZAK GURNAH: AFTERLIVES

Nobel Prize winner's saga of colonialism in Africa

At 18, Abdulrazak Gurnah arrived in England as a refugee from the *Zanzibar Revolution*. Receiving the Nobel Prize more than 50 years later, he reflected that the "prolonged period of poverty and alienation" he experienced made him a writer.

From the contemporary immigrant experience in his debut, *Memory of Departure*, to colonial wartime conscription in Booker Prize shortlisted *Paradise*, Abdulrazak's unflinching yet humane oeuvre interrogates the legacies of empire, centring that which is often too marginalised.

Listen as he and writer Sisonke Msimang discuss his tenth novel, *Afterlives* – an intergenerational portrait of love and loss under German occupation in East Africa.

4-5PM



## FEMINIST FIREBRANDS

Plot the pathways forward with these incendiary feminist voices

Four waves in, the feminist fight for gender equality is far from over. This panel brings together the powerful and incendiary feminist voices of Hannah Ferguson, Sisonke Msimang and Jennifer Robinson. Hear from these leading writers and activists who between them offer daring feminist opinions on topics ranging from freedom of speech, right-wing politics, racism, xenophobia, belonging and identity, taboos around sex and pleasure, as well as the legal judgements that continue to silence and disadvantage women.

Be inspired by the feminist firebrands who are fighting for meaningful social change. Hosted by the inimitable Jo Dyer, this is an important examination of the most pressing issues facing women today.

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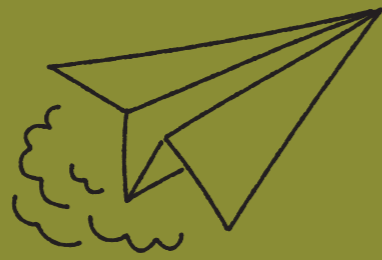
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FRIDAY 24 MAY

LIVE & LOCAL

# SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL



10-11AM



**CELESTE NG:  
OUR MISSING HEARTS**

The gripping, heart-rending follow-up to *Little Fires Everywhere*

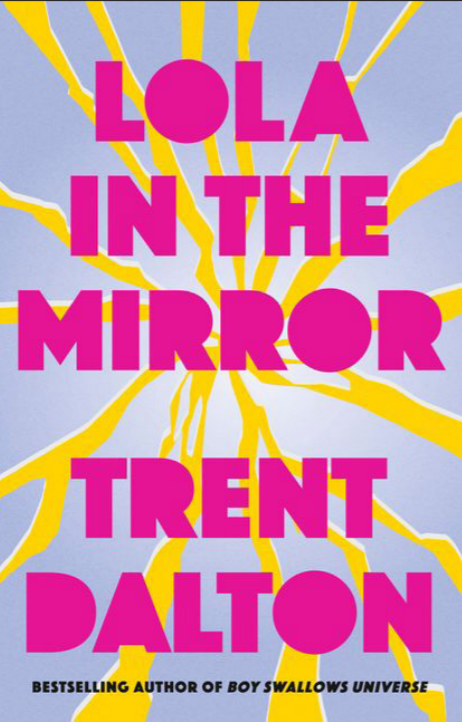
Banning books, waving flags and persecuting racial minorities. Sound familiar? Celeste Ng's third novel, *Our Missing Hearts*, is set in a marginally more dystopian version of Trump's America as a patriotic new law removes children from dissident parents.

After New York Times–bestselling novel *Little Fires Everywhere* – which was adapted into a popular miniseries starring Kerry Washington and Reese Witherspoon – comes a similarly moving tale about the unbreakable bond between a mother and son.

Sit down with Celeste and host Claire Nichols to discuss hope, hero librarians and the power of art to create change.

Celeste Ng appears thanks to the support of Sam Meers AO.

12-1PM



**TRENT DALTON:  
FROM ELI TO LOLA**

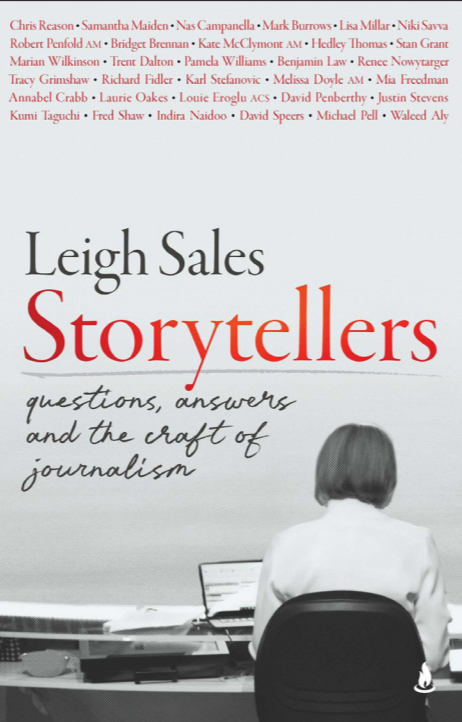
Beloved author returns to SWF in this career-spanning conversation

Trent Dalton has captured readers with books like *Boy Swallows Universe* and *All Our Shimmering Skies*. His storytelling voice and compelling characters cement him as a mainstay of Australian literature. His new novel, *Lola in the Mirror* is a darkly funny, and beautiful story of life, death and a country neck-deep in a national housing crisis.

Join Trent as he discusses his process of writing the intricacies of the real world, and real people, onto the page. A supremely compelling and entertaining speaker, Trent will be in conversation with Cassie McCullagh.

Supported by ARA.

2-3PM



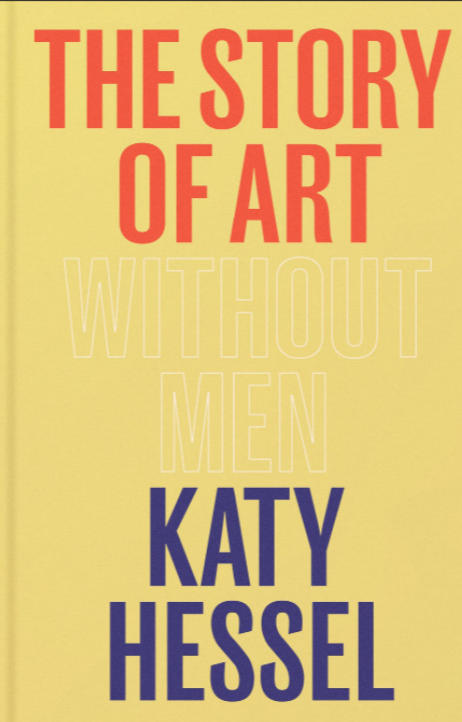
**STORYTELLERS: LEIGH SALES AND LISA MILLAR**

Veteran journalists shine a spotlight on the craft of non-fiction

ABC legend Leigh Sales turns the spotlight on the best in the business in *Storytellers; Questions, Answers and the Craft of Journalism*, revealing coveted trade secrets in the process. Leigh is joined in conversation by fellow legend Lisa Millar, whose own book *Muster Dogs*, provides an insight into the craft of non-fiction writing. With a combined 65 years in journalism, the co-hosts of last year's hit *Newsreader* companion podcast, unpack the craft of non-fiction writing and discuss the fine art of turning real life events into a compelling narrative. This session is for anyone who's ever wanted to be a journalist or even just wondered how the news gets made.

Supported by ARA.

4-5PM



**KATY HESSEL:  
THE STORY OF ART WITHOUT MEN**

Out with old masters, in with a new take on art history

How many women artists do you know? Who makes art history? And what is the Baroque anyway?

Enter art historian and curator Katy Hessel's *The Story of Art Without Men*, a response to E.H. Gombrich's classic chronicle, *The Story of Art*, first published in 1950, which was recently updated to include... one woman.

Katy's revisionist history builds on her popular podcast and Instagram account, *The Great Women Artists*, where her fresh approach has garnered fans worldwide and earned her a spot on the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 Europe list.

Overtune art history as you know it with Katy, in conversation with curator Beatrice Galton.

Katy Hessel appears thanks to the support of Rosie Williams and John Grill AO.

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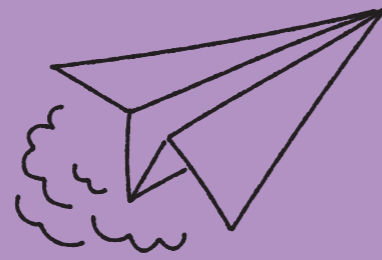
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SATURDAY 25 MAY

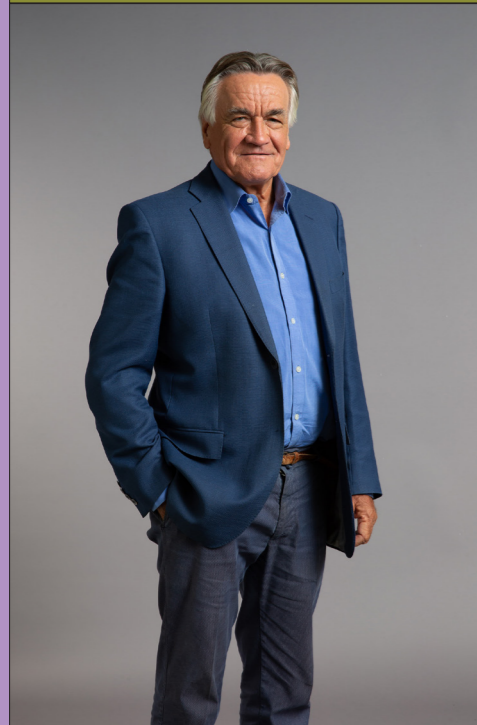
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# WRITERS' FESTIVAL

10-11AM



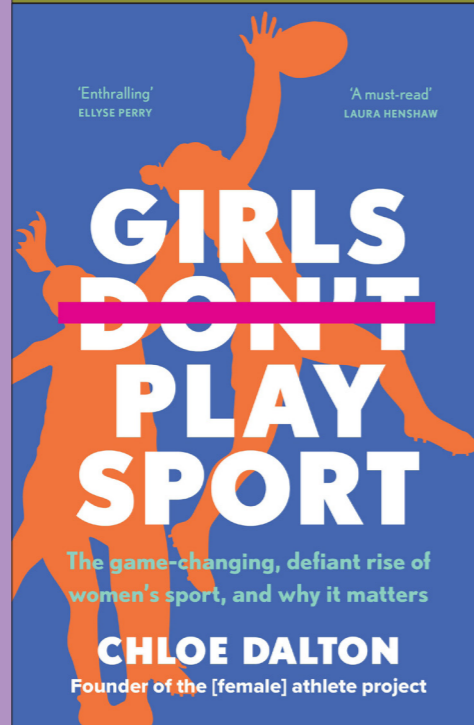
## BARRIE CASSIDY AND FRIENDS: STATE OF THE NATION

Review the year in AusPol at this Festival favourite

Relive all the thrills and spills of the year in Australian politics with veteran journo Barrie Cassidy and his hand-picked squad of the country's sharpest pundits.

From the supermarket wars and cost of living crisis to the hottest year on record and unexpected (or expected) resignations, it's all up for dissection as they take the pulse of the nation. Barrie shares the stage with political journalists Bridget Brennan, Amy Remeikis, Niki Savva and Laura Tingle.

11.30AM-12.30PM



## PLAY LIKE A GIRL

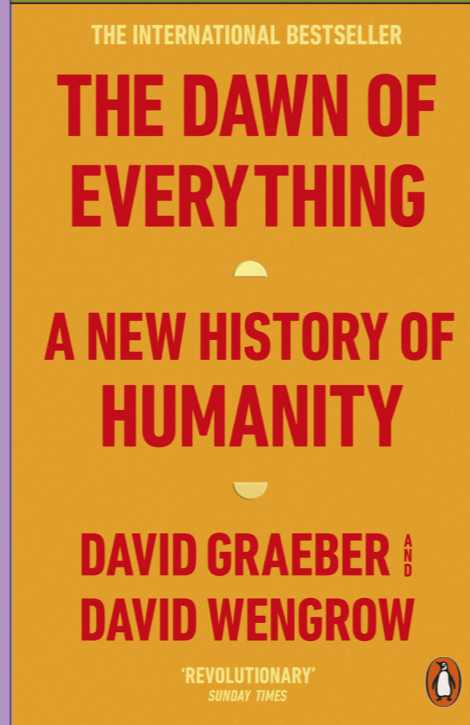
Keep Tillies fever burning in this celebration of women's sports

Matildas fever swept across Australia during the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, taking hold of new soccer fans and diehards alike. But where do we go next to tap into the potential of women's sport?

Hosted by *The Ticket* podcast's Tracey Holmes, this elite panel features Olympic rugby gold medalist Chloe Dalton (*Girls Don't Play Sport*), Australia's most decorated cycling Olympian Anna Meares, and world champion pro-athlete Jana Pittman (*Enough*).

Cheer on the sportswomen kicking goals for female athletes everywhere.

1.30-2.30PM



## DAVID WENGROW: THE DAWN OF EVERYTHING

Change the course of history, starting with the past

What kind of world could we create if we stopped believing inequality is the price of progress?

Archaeology professor David Wengrow's groundbreaking book, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*, co-authored with the late David Graeber, overturns the theories of Yuval Noah Harari (*Sapiens*), Jared Diamond (*Guns, Germs, and Steel*) and Steven Pinker (*Enlightenment Now*). Challenging dominant narratives that the agricultural revolution meant abandoning an egalitarian Eden, the book unearths advanced early civilisations that weren't governed by kings, presidents or authoritarian rule.

Transform your understanding of human evolution with David, in conversation with ABC RN's Richard Fidler, and learn how rewriting history may provide political inspiration for today.

3.30-4.30PM



## DARK TECHNOLOGIES

Exposing the technology of modern warfare

Machines lead the charge on today's battlefields, but what does this mean for the people caught in the crossfire?

Learn from journalist Antony Loewenstein, whose Walkley Award-winning investigation, *The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation Around the World*, uncovered the widespread commercialisation and global deployment of Israeli weaponry tested in Palestinian territories. Antony is joined by AI expert Toby Walsh, whose new book, *Faking It: Artificial Intelligence in a Human World*, explores how AI impersonates human intelligence.

Join them in this vital conversation with host Michael Richardson about the intersection of technology, conflict, occupation and surveillance.

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SUNDAY 26 MAY

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