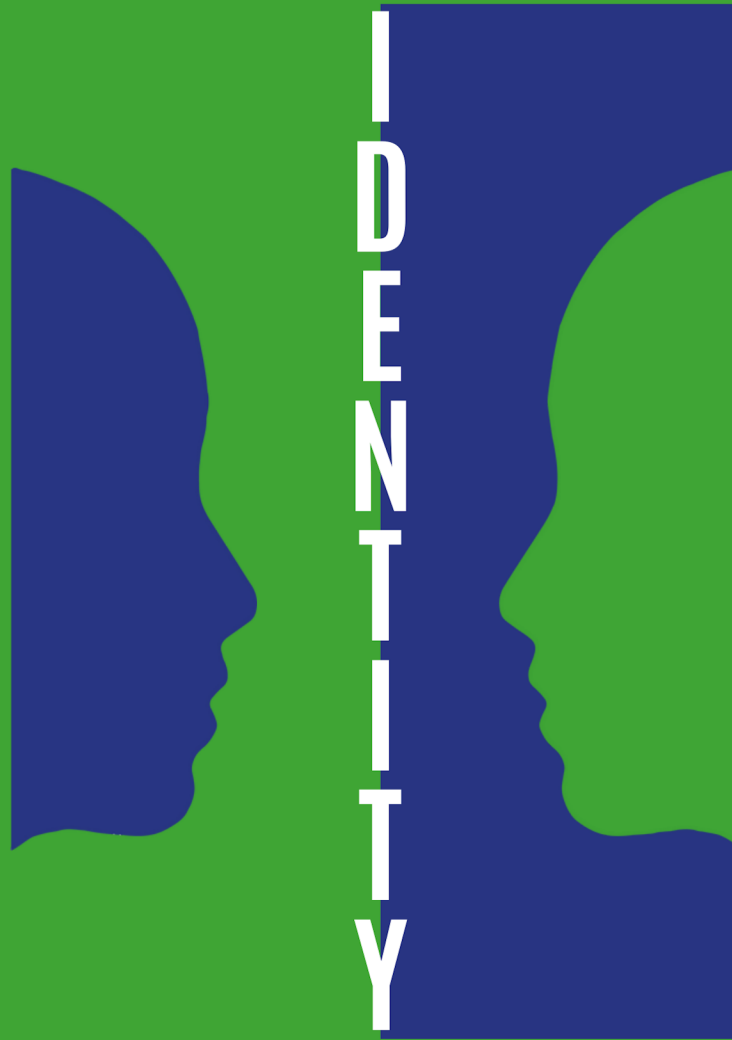


**SYDNEY  
JEWISH  
WRITERS  
FESTIVAL**

**2023 PROGRAM**

23 - 27 August



# WELCOME

Welcome to Shalom's Sydney Jewish Writers Festival 2023. What an honour and delight to bring you our biggest Festival since 2019 and return with gusto to the beautifully refurbished Bondi Pavilion as our milieu on the lands of the Bidjigal, Birrabirragal and Gadigal people.

At this year's Festival we welcome you to explore the word 'Identity' - from the personal to the cultural, the atlas to the mirror. With books as our compass, we present you with an exceptional gathering of storytellers, thinkers and experts from Australia and abroad to speak to this theme.

If the past few years have taught us anything, it's that we need each other and we need to stay in conversation about what makes us tick. Books offer us the framework to converse, commune and create. This Festival, we invite you to bring your curiosity, your ideas and your voice to this conversation.

The program is jam-packed and we are thrilled to once again be able to offer you an extensive selection of sessions – there is something for everyone, including our children. We've also added extra time between sessions to mingle and muse, and of course browse the books at our Festival bookshop Gertrude & Alice Bookstore. In the words of the fantastic Fran Lebowitz: 'Think before you speak. Read before you think'. Let us travel once again with our stories and discover who we are and where we are going.



A huge thank you to our clever, devoted and creative Sydney Jewish Writers Festival Programming Committee - Michaela Kalowski, Rita Nash and Adam van Rooijen, who collectively and individually bring so much to the essence of the Festival. And of course, my gratitude to the wonderful Shalom team who work tirelessly yet merrily behind the scenes to make this Festival the success and joy that it is.

I look forward to seeing you there!

**Miriam Hechtman**  
**Festival Director - Sydney Jewish Writers Festival**



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

*After Dark*

23.August.2023  
Wednesday

 **6.30PM**

**DAVID BADDIEL ON 'JEWS DON'T COUNT'**  
David Baddiel in conversation with journalist Jodi Lee  
in partnership with Jumpstart, powered by JCA,  
Exclusive Under 40s Event  
Theatre



24.August.2023  
Thursday

 **7.00PM**

**'WHO BY FIRE - LEONARD COHEN IN THE SINAI'**  
**INTERVIEW**  
Matti Friedman (via Zoom) in conversation with David Leser



**LIVE LEONARD COHEN TRIBUTE CONCERT**  
with Nadav Kahn, Jessica Chapnik Kahn, Abby Dobson  
& Graeme Pillemer  
Theatre

26.August.2023  
Saturday

 **7.30PM**

**THE TRAGEDY OF JEWISH COMEDY**  
A hilarious panel with David Baddiel, Robyn Reynolds,  
Shoshana Gottlieb & Ben Ellwood  
in partnership with Matzah! Productions  
Theatre



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE



27. August. 2023  
Sunday

 **8.30AM**

**MORNING YOGA - POETRY & THE BODY**  
with Magdalena Ball & Idit Hefer Tamir  
Seagull Room



 **10.00AM**

**TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST TO KIDS THROUGH BOOKS**  
with Kim Slender, Lee-Anne Whitten & Rita Nash  
Theatre



**LAUGHTER AND GRIEF**  
with Ros Ben-Moshe, Joanne Fedler, Rabbi Genende & Suzanne Leal  
Seagull Room



**TWEEN SESSION**



**SO THAT HAPPENED...**  
1 hour workshop with Tami Sussman  
(10-12 YRS)  
Yalagang Room



 **11.30AM**

**'JEWS DON'T COUNT' DOCUMENTARY SCREENING**  
bookings essential  
Theatre



**FREE**

**HEATHER MITCHELL - UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT**  
with Heather Mitchell & Michaela Kalowski  
Seagull Room



**DEVELOPING WRITER'S VOICE**  
2 hour workshop with Lee Kofman  
Yalagang Room



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE



27. August. 2023  
Sunday

 **1.00PM**

**WHO WILL BE FOR US?**

Unpacking antisemitism with David Baddiel & Alex Ryvchin  
Theatre



**PUTTING AGE ON THE PAGE**

with Melissa Levi, Dr Anne Ring, Dr Norman Swan  
& Aviva Lowy  
Seagull Room



 **1.15PM**

**ESCAPING A CULT**

with Prof. Debbie Haski-Leventhal & Justine Saidman  
High Tide Room



 **2.00PM**

**LAUGHTER YOGA**

30 min fun & energising workshop with Ros Ben-Moshe  
Atrium

**FREE**



**KIDS SESSION**



**LITTLE LIT LOVERS**

1.5 hour workshop with Beck Feiner, Robin Feiner  
& PJ Library's Wendy Dolowitz  
(5-8 YRS, DROP-OFF)

Yalagang Room



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

27. August. 2023  
Sunday



 **2.30PM**

**CLIMATE COURAGE**  
with Tim Hollo, Natalie Isaacs, Rabbi Genende & Wendy Frew  
Theatre



**WOMEN ON THE VERGE**  
with Katia Ariel, Elise Esther Hearst, Kerri Sackville & Magdalena Ball  
Seagull Room



 **2.45PM**

**FINDING YOUR STORY'S IDENTITY**  
with Joanne Fedler, Leah Kaminsky, Lee Kofman & Anita Jacoby  
High Tide Room



 **4.00PM**

**L'CHAIM! WE'RE READING**  
with Katia Ariel, Rabbi Genende, Elise Esther Hearst, Leah Kaminsky, Lee Kofman, Suzanne Leal, Tami Sussman, Kerri Sackville & Scott Whitmont  
Seagull Room



**THE JEWS OF KINGS CROSS**  
with Evelyn Frybort, Louis Nowra & Michael Visontay  
High Tide Room



**IN THE ROOM - MENTORING SESSION**  
with Hachette's Sophie Hamley (under 40s, limited spots)  
Yalagang Room



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

*After Dark*

27.August.2023  
Sunday.Closing Night

 **6.00PM**

**FOURPLAY STRING QUARTET ALBUM LAUNCH**  
'A Taste of...' including pieces from 'Signs of Life'  
Theatre



 **7.30PM**

**THE GOD DESIRE**  
David Baddiel in conversation with Dr Meredith Lake  
Theatre



Wednesday.23.August.2023

6.30pm - 8.30pm

Theatre.The Bondi Pavilion. 



After Dark

# DAVID BADDIEL ON 'JEWS DON'T COUNT'

David Baddiel in conversation with journalist Jodi Lee  
Exclusive Under 40s Event

For our stellar opening night event, 'Jews Don't Count' author David Baddiel arrives in Sydney from the UK to unpack the big themes of Identity and Antisemitism. 'Jews Don't Count' is a book for people who consider themselves on the right side of history and how one type of racism has been left out of this fight. Baddiel will be in conversation with journalist Jodi Lee.

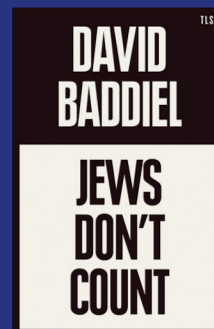
This session includes a special screening of the Channel 4 (UK) documentary, 'Jews Don't Count'. Partnering with Jumpstart, powered by JCA, this event is exclusively for under 40s.



**DAVID BADDIEL** is a comedian, author, screenwriter, television presenter and Jewish activist. Following the publication of his bestselling polemic 'Jews Don't Count', David has been at the forefront of tackling antisemitism in the media, sport, and more broadly, the progressive left. The book became The Sunday Times Politics and Current Affairs Book of the Year, 2021. (Photo: Steve Best\_Xavicus Media)



**JODI LEE** is a television news journalist, event MC and Communication Coach. Jodi brings the news that matters to hundreds of thousands of Australians each night. For more than a decade she has been privileged to have a front row seat to history. Jodi was live from Bourke St moments after tragedy struck, on the shores as Mick Fanning surfed his last competitive wave and most recently at Premier Daniel Andrews' daily COVID19 press conferences.



Thursday, 24 August 2023

7.00pm - 9.00pm

Theatre. The Bondi Pavilion. 

After Dark



# 'WHO BY FIRE - LEONARD COHEN IN THE SINAI'

Matti Friedman (via Zoom) in conversation with David Leser

To celebrate the release of 'Who By Fire', author Matti Friedman joins us live from Jerusalem.

In October 1973, poet and singer Leonard Cohen travelled from Hydra to the Sinai desert when Egypt attacked Israel on Yom Kippur. In his book, Friedman gives us a riveting account of those weeks in the Sinai, drawing on Leonard Cohen's previously unpublished writing and original reporting to create a kaleidoscopic depiction of a harrowing, formative moment for both a young country at war and a singer at a crossroads.

Following the interview enjoy a Leonard Cohen tribute concert, reminiscent of the singer's time in Sinai, with Jessica Chapnik Kahn, Nadav Kahn, Abby Dobson & Graeme Pillemer.



**MATTI FRIEDMAN** is an award-winning journalist and author. Born in Toronto and based in Jerusalem, his work has appeared regularly in publications including the New York Times, The Atlantic and Tablet. His last book, 'Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel', won the 2019 Natan Prize and the Canadian Jewish Book Award for history. 'Pumpkinflowers: A Soldier's Story of a Forgotten War' was chosen in 2016 as a New York Times Notable Book and one of Amazon's 10 best books of the year.



**DAVID LESER** is a multi-award-winning Australian journalist and author of seven books, including his memoir 'To Begin To Know', shortlisted for the 2015 National Biography Award, and the recent critically acclaimed 'Women, Men and the Whole Damn Thing', about patriarchy and misogyny in the age of #MeToo. A former Middle East and Washington correspondent, he is a contributor to Good Weekend magazine and a Doctor of Creative Arts in the ethics of memoir. (Photo: Chris Crerar)



Thursday, 24 August 2023

7.00pm - 9.00pm

Theatre. The Bondi Pavilion. 🎧

After Dark



# LIVE LEONARD COHEN TRIBUTE CONCERT

A Leonard Cohen tribute concert, reminiscent of the singer's time in Sinai, with Jessica Chapnik Kahn, Nadav Kahn, Abby Dobson & Graeme Pillemer.



**JESSICA CHAPNIK KAHN** is an Argentinian-Australian singer-songwriter, actor & writer.


**NADAV KAHN** is an Israeli-born, Australia-based APRA award-winning songwriter, releasing 12 albums to date.



**ABBY DOBSON** is an Australian singer and songwriter. She is a founding member of 'Leonardo's Bride' and 'Baby et Lulu'.



Photo: Isaac Shokal

**Saturday.26.August.2023**  
**7.30pm - 9.00pm**  
**Theatre.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



*After Dark*

# THE TRAGEDY OF JEWISH COMEDY

**A hilarious panel with David Baddiel**

**Why do Jews love to laugh through the pain?**

Don't miss this raucously funny panel discussion about the Jewish tradition of coping with trauma through comedy. From meme pages to podcasts, and of course, stand-up comedy - Jews just love a joke! Enjoy fresh perspectives on intergenerational trauma, and why Jews still flock to the comedy industry. Featuring David Baddiel, Ben Ellwood, Shoshana Gottlieb and Robyn Reynolds. This event is partnered with Matzah Productions, producers of the Jewish Comedy Showcase.



**DAVID BADDIEL** is a comedian, author, screenwriter, television presenter and Jewish activist. Following the publication of his bestselling polemic 'Jews Don't Count', David has been at the forefront of tackling antisemitism in the media, sport, and more broadly, the progressive left. The book became The Sunday Times Politics and Current Affairs Book of the Year, 2021. (Photo: Steve Best\_Xavicus Media)



**SHOSHANA GOTTLIEB** is a writer and Jewish educator based in Sydney. She has spent the last three and a half years posting silly jokes on the internet and getting recognised for it on the streets of Jerusalem. Shoshana has an honours degree in Creative Writing and a certificate of Advanced Jewish Education. Her mother thinks she would've made an excellent doctor.



**ROBYN REYNOLDS** is an award-nominated comedian and writer, originally from the UK. In 2022 she was nominated for Best Comedy at Sydney Fringe Festival, and shortlisted for the Emerging Writer Award (NIDA). A captivating performer, Reynolds has sold out across multiple festivals. Reynolds draws light from the darker moments in life. "Reynolds is a gregarious raconteuse" - ArtsHub

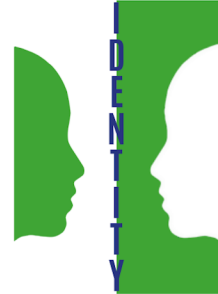


**BEN ELLWOOD** is a stand-up comedian, podcaster, TV writer and dog trainer. He is currently writing for Hard Quiz and The Project. Ellwood is a seasoned comedy writer and a beloved staple of the Sydney Comedy Scene. For Ellwood, comedy is blood borne. His grandfather was a victim of the Jewish Holocaust who claimed that laughter and comedy is what kept him going through all the hardships.

**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**8.30am - 9.30am**

**Seagull Room.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# MORNING YOGA - POETRY & THE BODY

**Experiential poetry and yoga class with Magdalena Ball & Idit Hefer Tamir**

Start your day with a yoga class like no other. Add some words to your Asanas. Poet Emily Dickinson says, 'I am out with lanterns looking for myself' - this session will be a metaphorical lantern, combining meditation, breath, yoga flow, and poetry to help you find new avenues of self-discovery through movement, reflection, and creation. Join poet Magdalena Ball and Sukha Mukha yoga instructor Idit Hefer Tamir for a relaxing, free flowing session for all levels of yoga and poetic practice.



**IDIT HEFER TAMIR** is the founder of Sukha Mukha Yoga and Director of Sukha Mukha Yoga teacher training. She has been immersed in the practice and philosophy of yoga for over 25 years. Idit is driven to share its teachings, wisdom, philosophy, and joy with others. Her hope is to facilitate healing, empowerment, and a rediscovery of the immense knowledge, power, and wisdom that resides within each individual.



**MAGDALENA BALL** is a novelist, poet, reviewer, interviewer, and managing editor of 'Compulsive Reader'. Her stories, editorials, poetry, reviews, and interviews have appeared in a wide number of journals and anthologies and have won local and international awards. She is the author of several novels and poetry books, most recently, 'Bobish', a verse memoir published in 2023.



**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**10.00am - 11.00am**

**Theatre. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST TO KIDS THROUGH BOOKS

**A panel with Kim Slender, Lee-Anne Whitten & Rita Nash**

How do we teach hard things like war to kids?

Join Rita Nash in conversation with Sydney Jewish Museum's Lee-Anne Whitten and Kim Slender to look at Holocaust education for school-aged students and how books can be the bridge to understand and explore difficult subject matter. From graphic novels and cartoons, to fiction, non-fiction, and poetry – we explore how books open up the lines for communication and arm parents with knowledge, words and confidence so that they can have these hard conversations with their kids – with books as the key.



**LEE-ANNE WHITTEN** is a Senior Educator at the Sydney Jewish Museum. Lee-Anne is an expert presenter, facilitator and educator. She is passionate about teaching through individual stories and the transmission of memory from Holocaust survivors. Through her work at the museum teaching young people she has extensive experience with Holocaust texts and stories.



**RITA NASH** managed an independent bookshop for 13 years after many years of teaching and librarianship in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Rita described the process of coming to terms with her Holocaust demons in her story 'The Last Barrier'. She has recently been researching and writing the story of the Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust by fleeing to the Soviet Union. This is her 13th year on the SJWF Programming Committee.



**KIM SLENDER** is a qualified Registered Psychologist and Family Therapist, and Psychology and Education Consultant for the Sydney Jewish Museum. Through her experience as a school psychologist and working with Holocaust survivors, Kim has significant insight into the impacts of learning about the Holocaust on young people.

**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**10.00am - 11.00am**

**Seagull Room. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# LAUGHTER & GRIEF

**A panel with Ros Ben-Moshe, Joanne Fedler, Rabbi Genende & Suzanne Leal**

'To laugh and cry and cry and laugh about it all again' - Leonard Cohen

Join Suzanne Leal to explore grief, laughter and all that lives in between with laughter, wellness and positivity expert Ros Ben-Moshe, author and writing mentor Joanne Fedler and community leader Rabbi Ralph Genende.



**ROS BEN-MOSHE** is a Laughter, Wellbeing and Positivity author and academic. She is an Adjunct lecturer at the School of Public Health and Psychology at La Trobe University and author of 'The Laughter Effect - How to Build Joy, Resilience and Positivity in Your Life' and 'Laughing at Cancer -How to Heal with Love, Laughter and Mindfulness'. She regularly provides expert opinion in the media and writes for assorted publications. (Photo: Steve Cook)



**SUZANNE LEAL** is an author, lawyer by profession, experienced facilitator and host at community, corporate, and literary events. Her debut novel for young readers, 'Running with Ivan', is a time-travel adventure inspired by true events in wartime Europe. Suzanne's novels for general readers include 'The Watchful Wife', 'The Deceptions' and 'The Teacher's Secret'. She is the founder of 'Thursday Book Club', connecting readers online. (Photo: Georgia Dunn)



**RABBI RALPH GENENDE OAM** has a passion for social justice and creating bridges between different cultures and faiths. He has many roles including Senior Rabbi and Manager Jewish Care Victoria, Principal Rabbi ADF, Member of the Religious Advisory Council, board member AIJAC, and member of the Premier's Multifaith Advisory Group. 'Living in an Upside-Down World' is an anthology gathered over 20 years of writing examining the many crises and challenges of the 21st century.



**JOANNE FEDLER** is the internationally bestselling author of 15 books including 'Your Story: how to write it so others will want to read it', 'Writing is Medicine for the Soul' and 'Unbecoming'. She co-authored 'Gagman' with her father, political cartoonist Dov Fedler about a man who survives the concentration camps by telling jokes. Her book 'Things Without A Name' has been optioned by Bunya Productions for a TV mini-series. (Photo: Cynthia Sciberras)

**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**10.00am - 11.00am**

**Yalagang Room.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# SO THAT HAPPENED...

**Tami Sussman**

**TWEEN WORKSHOP 10 - 12 YEARS**

Set in a Sydney Jewish school, Tami Sussman's hilarious and heart-warming debut 'So That Happened... But Maybe You Already Knew That' tackles how to be a good friend (and realise when you've been a bad one), leaving childhood behind, and, most importantly, how to get back up when it feels like the world has knocked you down. Creatives aged 10-12 years old are invited to this Q&A and writing workshop, hosted by the author.



**TAMI SUSSMAN** is a Sydney-based author with a background in theatre, comedy, and spoken word poetry. She facilitates creative workshops for primary and high school students and writes humorous content for online and print magazines. Her children's book 'Tiny Tradies' and her Tween novel, 'So That Happened... But Maybe You Already Knew That' were published in 2023.

**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**11.30am - 12.30pm**

**Theatre.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# 'JEWS DON'T COUNT' DOCUMENTARY SCREENING

In this fascinating and timely film, writer and comedian David Baddiel looks at antisemitism and the progressive left. From theatre to football, Baddiel explores a political blindspot with Stephen Fry, Miriam Margolyes and Neil Gaiman. As screened on Channel 4 in the UK. Free documentary screening.



**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**11.30am - 12.30pm**

**Seagull Room.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# HEATHER MITCHELL - UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

**Heather Mitchell in conversation with Michaela Kalowski**

Training an unflinching spotlight on her most formative memories, Heather Mitchell illuminates the heartbreaking secrets, sexual encounters, family dramas and creative pursuits that have shaped her life as a woman, an actor and a mother. Told with raw candour and spellbinding lyricism, 'Everything and Nothing' draws back the curtain on a unique and fascinating life. Acclaimed actor, Heather Mitchell will be in conversation with Michaela Kalowski.



**HEATHER MITCHELL AM** is one of Australia's most acclaimed actors. Her film credits range from 'Proof' and 'Malcolm' to 'Muriel's Wedding', 'The Great Gatsby' and many more. She has been a mainstay of Australian television and on stage, Heather has performed in more than fifty theatre productions, and is a director of the Sydney Theatre Company. In 2020, she received an Order of Australia for service to the performing arts and the community. (Photo: Julie Adams)



**MICHAELA KALOWSKI** is an interviewer, moderator & curator for writers and ideas festivals. Highlight interviews include Margaret Atwood, Amos Oz, Michelle de Kretser, Etgar Keret & Stan Grant. She's curator of ABC RN's on-air writers' festival, 'Big Weekend of Books'. Michaela has conducted radio interviews and presented programs across ABC radio and is the co-presenter & co-writer of a two-part family history podcast for ABC RN called 'Laya's Way Home'.

**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**11.30am - 1.30pm**

**Yalagang Room, The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# DEVELOPING WRITER'S VOICE

**2 hour workshop with Lee Kofman**

What makes a literary work truly original is not the degree of its polishing, but the writer's voice: their particular joy, angst, humour, credo, word choices, and worldviews expressed. The emotional truth of the voice is everything in writing. Even the best story won't work if you don't get the voice right. Come to explore what YOUR voice is like with author Lee Kofman. This workshop will guide you to explore your inner world: thoughts and emotions and learn how to make use of them for your literary projects.



**LEE KOFMAN** is a Russian-born, Ukrainian-raised Israeli-Australian author. Her works include 'The Writer Laid Bare', her memoirs 'Imperfect', shortlisted for Nib Literary Award, and 'The Dangerous Bride' and three fiction books published in Israel. She is the co-editor of 'Rebellious Daughters' and editor of 'Split', anthologies of memoir by prominent Australian authors, longlisted for ABIA Awards. Her short works have been widely published in Australia, US, UK, Scotland, Israel and Canada.

**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**1.00pm - 2.00pm**

**Theatre.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



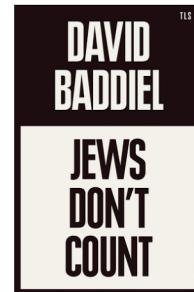
# WHO WILL BE FOR US?

**Unpacking antisemitism with David Baddiel & Alex Ryvchin**

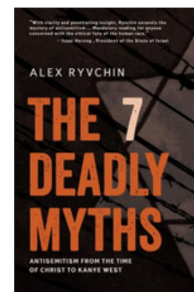
David Baddiel, author of bestselling non-fiction polemic 'Jews Don't Count', joins us to unpack antisemitism with Alex Ryvchin. 'Jews Don't Count' is a book for people who consider themselves on the right side of history and how one type of racism has been left out of this fight. Alex Ryvchin will be discussing his latest book, 'The 7 Deadly Myths'.



**DAVID BADDIEL** is a comedian, author, screenwriter, television presenter and Jewish activist. Following the publication of his bestselling polemic 'Jews Don't Count', David has been at the forefront of tackling antisemitism in the media, sport, and more broadly, the progressive left. The book became The Sunday Times Politics and Current Affairs Book of the Year, 2021. (Photo: Steve Best\_Xavicus Media)



**ALEX RYVCHIN** is co-Chief Executive Officer of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the author of internationally acclaimed books of history and politics, and a best-selling children's author. He writes for leading publications and speaks, debates and teaches around the world on the Arab-Israeli conflict, foreign and national affairs, antisemitism and the Holocaust, and religion and identity, and is a regular commentator on TV and radio. (Photo: Martine Payne)



**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**1.00pm - 2.00pm**

**Seagull Room, The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# PUTTING AGE ON THE PAGE

**with Melissa Levi, Dr Anne Ring, Dr Norman Swan & Aviva Lowy**

We need to talk about ageing. Discuss all that the word connotes with psychologist and author Melissa Levi, doctor and broadcaster Dr Norman Swan and sociologist and author Dr Anne Ring. Moderated by journalist Aviva Lowy.



**MELISSA LEVI** has specialised in older people's mental health and dementia for over a decade. She is committed to educating and empowering families to better understand ageing, have big conversations and plan for the future. Her mission inspired 'We Need to Talk About Ageing' and her website Talking Ageing - resources she wishes had been available for her own family when her grandfather was diagnosed with dementia.



**DR NORMAN SWAN**, trained in paediatrics, was one of the first medically qualified journalists in Australia, with a broadcast career spanning more than 30 years. He currently hosts Radio National's 'The Health Report' and co-hosts 'Coronacast'. He also reports on '7.30' and is a guest reporter on 'Four Corners'; appears on 'The Drum' and is an occasional host of 'Radio National Breakfast'. Dr Swan sits on the board of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.



**DR ANNE RING** is an 81-year-old freelance writer and author of 'Engaging with Ageing: What Matters as We Grow Older'. She challenges the stigma of old age, with a realistically positive approach that acts as a reader's travel guide to navigating how they choose to age. She has a PhD in health sociology and degrees in psychology, anthropology and health education. Her articles on ageing have been published in a variety of media. (Photo: Simona Janek)



**AVIVA LOWY** started her career as a news journalist with 2JZZ. Since then, she has worked in media/comms roles with ABC Radio, Department of Community Services and Health (including the Office of Ageing), UNSW and the Faculty of Medicine at Sydney University. She now writes a quarterly book review for Plus61J Media.

**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**1.15pm - 2.15pm**

**High Tide Room. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# ESCAPING A CULT

**with Prof. Debbie Haski-Leventhal & Justine Saidman**

'Unorthodox' meets 'Start with Why'. As a child in the 80s, Debbie Haski-Leventhal was practising peculiar rituals at a cult-like Kabbalah Centre in Israel. Today she is a professor at the Macquarie Business School and an expert on corporate social responsibility. How did she escape a Kabbalah cult, become a 'professor of purpose' and master the art of finding personal meaning in life? Join us to find out.



**DEBBIE HASKI-LEVENTHAL** is a professor of corporate social responsibility and the MBA director at Macquarie University, with five books and over 60 academic articles. Debbie is a public speaker and a TED speaker on meaning, impact, and purpose. (Photo: Effy Alexakis)



**JUSTINE SAIDMAN** is currently CEO of the Australian Jewish Fertility Network as well as a consultant for Launchpad Leadership. With a long connection to Shalom, she was Director of PJ Library in Australia for seven years and Director of the Sydney Jewish Writers Festival for three years. Justine has a Certificate in Jewish Leadership from Spertus Institute in Chicago, and a Masters in Jewish Education from Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**2.30pm - 3.30pm**

**Theatre. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# CLIMATE COURAGE

**with Tim Hollo, Natalie Isaacs, Rabbi Genende & Wendy Frew**

Where are we headed and what will it take to (not) go there? Our esteemed panel of climate experts Tim Hollo and Natalie Isaacs along with Rabbi Genende invite us into the conversation we all need to be having. Journalist Wendy Frew will moderate this session.



**TIM HOLLO** is Executive Director of the Green Institute and wrote 'Living Democracy' while a visiting fellow at the Australian National University's RegNet. A musician, environmentalist and community activist, he was the Communications Director for Greens Leader Christine Milne and a board member and campaigner at Greenpeace Australia Pacific. He is the founder of Green Music Australia and has recorded seven albums and toured globally with FourPlay String Quartet.



**NATALIE ISAACS** is the founder of 1 Million Women, a global movement of women and girls who take practical action to fight dangerous climate change by changing the way they live. Her first book, 'Every Woman's Guide to Saving the Planet' has been published in Australia, the UK and the US. Her second book, 'Right Here, Right Now' will be available internationally in September. Under Natalie's leadership, 1 Million Women has grown from scratch into a movement of over 1,000,000.



**WENDY FREW** is an award-winning journalist specialising in reporting about the environment and sustainability. Wendy has worked in Australia and overseas for several media organisations, including Fairfax, Reuters and the BBC. These days, she's a reporter on 2SER Radio's 'Think Sustainability' podcast.



**RABBI RALPH GENENDE OAM** has a passion for social justice, preserving this wondrous planet and creating bridges between different cultures and faiths. He has many roles including Senior Rabbi and Manager Jewish Care Victoria, Principal Rabbi ADF, Member of the Religious Advisory Council, board member AIJAC, and member of the Premier's Multifaith Advisory Group. 'Living in an Upside-Down World' is an anthology gathered over 20 years of writing examining the many crises and challenges of the 21st century.

**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**2.30pm - 3.30pm**

**Seagull Room.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# WOMEN ON THE VERGE

**with Katia Ariel, Elise Esther Hearst, Kerri Sackville & Magdalena Ball**

On the cusp. On the precipice. How do we step into change? How do we make life decisions that may alter our perceived identity and take us on a new path. Crisscrossing fiction and memoir, authors Katia Ariel, Elise Esther Hearst and Kerri Sackville take that leap. Moderated by author Magdalena Ball.



**KATIA ARIEL** was born in Odessa, Ukraine and is based in Melbourne/Naarm. She is an author, book editor and educator. She was a recipient of the Varuna Residential fellowship in 2022 and has been published in a variety of literary journals. Her memoir, 'The Swift Dark Tide', published by Gazebo Books in 2023, chronicles the discovery of queerness later in life, as well as the history of desire and rebellion in her female line.



**ELISE ESTHER HEARST** is a Melbourne-based playwright and author, described as 'one of the most interesting young playwriting voices in Australian theatre,' by Arts Review. Recently, a resident writer at the Melbourne Theatre Company, and a co-writer on 'A Very Jewish Christmas Carol', premiering Nov 2023. Past playwriting credits include 'The Sea Project' (Griffin Theatre) which was shortlisted for the Griffin Award, and co-writer on the sell-out production of 'Yentl' (2022).



**KERRI SACKVILLE** is an Australian author, columnist, and social commentator. Kerri's work has appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, The Telegraph, Maddison, Women's Weekly Online, SBS Life, Mamamia.com, Grazia UK, The Sunday Times UK and more. She has made frequent appearances on television programs and regularly pops up on various radio stations.



**MAGDALENA BALL** is a novelist, poet, reviewer, interviewer, and managing editor of 'Compulsive Reader'. Her stories, editorials, poetry, reviews, and interviews have appeared in a wide number of journals and anthologies and have won local and international awards. She is the author of several novels and poetry books, most recently, 'Bobish', a verse memoir published in 2023.



**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**2.45pm - 3.45pm**

**High Tide Room. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# FINDING YOUR STORY'S IDENTITY

with **Joanne Fedler, Leah Kaminsky, Lee Kofman & Anita Jacoby**

How to craft the words we need to tell the story we need to tell. From playwriting to fiction to poetry to memoir - these three wordsmiths cross genres and travel in time and place to find the right framework for their words. Moderated by Anita Jacoby.



**LEE KOFMAN** is a Russian-born, Ukrainian-raised Israeli-Australian author. Her works include 'The Writer Laid Bare', her memoirs 'Imperfect', shortlisted for Nib Literary Award, and 'The Dangerous Bride' and three fiction books published in Israel. She is the co-editor of 'Rebellious Daughters' and editor of 'Split', anthologies of memoir by prominent Australian authors, longlisted for ABIA Awards. Her short works have been widely published in Australia, US, UK, Scotland, Israel and Canada.



**LEAH KAMINSKY** is a physician and award-winning writer. Her debut novel, 'The Waiting Room', won the Voss Literary Prize. 'The Hollow Bones' won both the Literary Fiction and Historical Fiction categories of the 2019 International Book Awards, and the 2019 American Book Fest's Best Book Award for Literary Fiction. She is the author of ten books and holds an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts.



**JOANNE FEDLER** is the internationally bestselling author of 15 books including 'Your Story: how to write it so others will want to read it', 'Writing is Medicine for the Soul' and 'Unbecoming'. She co-authored 'Gagman' with her father, political cartoonist Dov Fedler about a man who survives the concentration camps by telling jokes. Her book 'Things Without A Name' has been optioned by Bunya Productions for a TV mini-series. (Photo: Cynthia Sciberras)



**ANITA JACOBY AM** is a leading advocate for women in leadership and media. She is one of Australia's most awarded television producers and has received numerous industry awards. She is currently Chair of the ABC Advisory Council, Co-chair of Women in Media, a Board member of Chief Executive Women and more. Anita's first book 'Secrets Beyond the Screen' was published in 2022.

Sunday, 27 August 2023

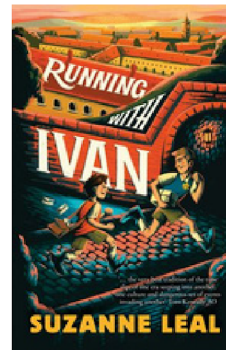
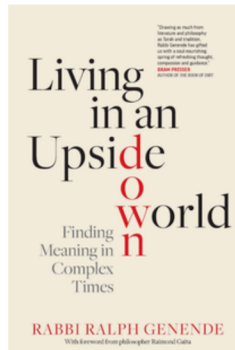
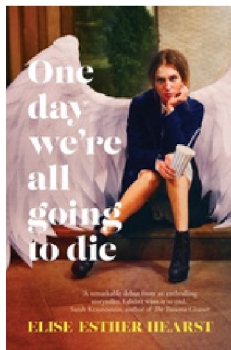
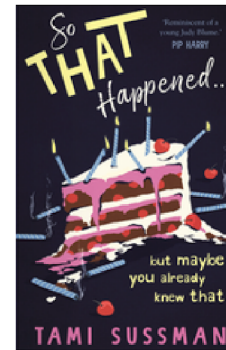
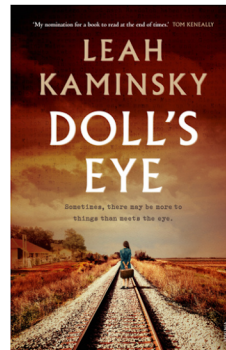
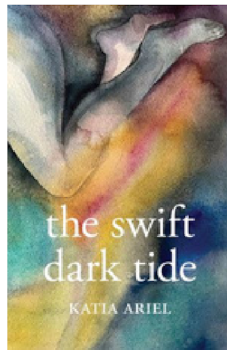
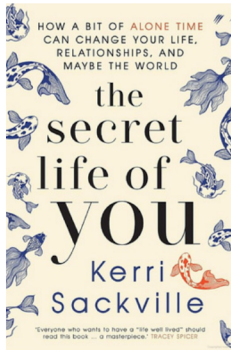
4.00pm - 5.30pm

Seagull Room. The Bondi Pavilion. 



# L'CHAIM! WE'RE READING

L'Chaim! Let's make a toast and listen to our Festival authors read excerpts from their latest books. Join Katia Ariel, Rabbi Ralph Genende, Elise Esther Hearst, Leah Kaminsky, Lee Kofman, Suzanne Leal, Kerri Sackville & Tami Sussman. Moderated by Scott Whitmont.



**Sunday, 27 August 2023**

**4.00pm - 5.00pm**

**High Tide Room. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# THE JEWS OF KINGS CROSS

**with Evelyn Frybort, Louis Nowra & Michael Visontay.**

Join 'Memories of Kings Cross' editor Evelyn Frybort and author of 'Kings Cross - A Biography' Louis Nowra for a lively session unpacking the stories of Jews who lived in Kings Cross between the 1930s to 1960s. This session will be moderated by Michael Visontay who also has a story in Frybort's book.



**MICHAEL VISONTAY** is Commissioning Editor of Plus61J Media and was Editor-in-Chief from 2017-22. He has worked for 40 years as a journalist, editor, author, and lecturer across a broad range of Australian media. Michael is a former Assistant Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, Deputy Editor of the Sun-Herald and columnist with The Australian Jewish News. Michael has co-authored four memoirs, including 'Who Gave You Permission?' The memoir of child sex abuse survivor, Manny Waks. He also wrote 'Welcome To Wanderland: Western Sydney Wanderers and the 'Pride of the West'.



**LOUIS NOWRA** is the author of such plays as 'Cosi', 'Radiance' and 'The Boyce Trilogy'. He has written non-fiction works including 'The Cheated', 'Warne's World', and 'Bad Dreaming', the novels 'The Misery of Beauty', 'Palu' and 'Ice', young adult novels, memoirs, radio plays, telemovies and film scripts. In 'Kings Cross - A Biography', Nowra burrows beneath the sensationalist underbelly 'sex and sin' narrative, revealing stories and a cast of characters - some household names others little-known - that not even a writer could conjure up. (Photo: Adam Knott)



**EVELYN FRYBORT** was born in 1947 and is a child of Jewish refugees. She spent her childhood growing up between her Rose Bay family home and father's hairdressing salon in Kings Cross. The success of her family history book and interest in social history encouraged her to curate an anthology of personal memoirs 'Memories of Kings Cross', relating to the relationship between Jews and Kings Cross.

**Sunday.27.August.2023**

**4.00pm - 5.30pm**

**Yalagang Room.The Bondi Pavilion.** 



# IN THE ROOM WITH HACHETTE'S SOPHIE HAMLEY

**Exclusive Under 40s**

An exclusive opportunity for aspiring writers and creatives to be mentored by Hachette publisher and author Sophie Hamley. Limited spots available.



**SOPHIE HAMLEY** is an author and publisher who lives in Sydney. She has written several fiction and non-fiction books. In her spare time, she writes about country music on her blog, 'Sunburnt Country Music'. She has been practising yoga since 1993 and teaching since 2002. Sophie's debut novel, 'The Inaugural Meeting of the Fairvale Ladies Book Club', was a Top Ten bestseller.

Sunday.27.August.2023

2.00pm - 3.30pm

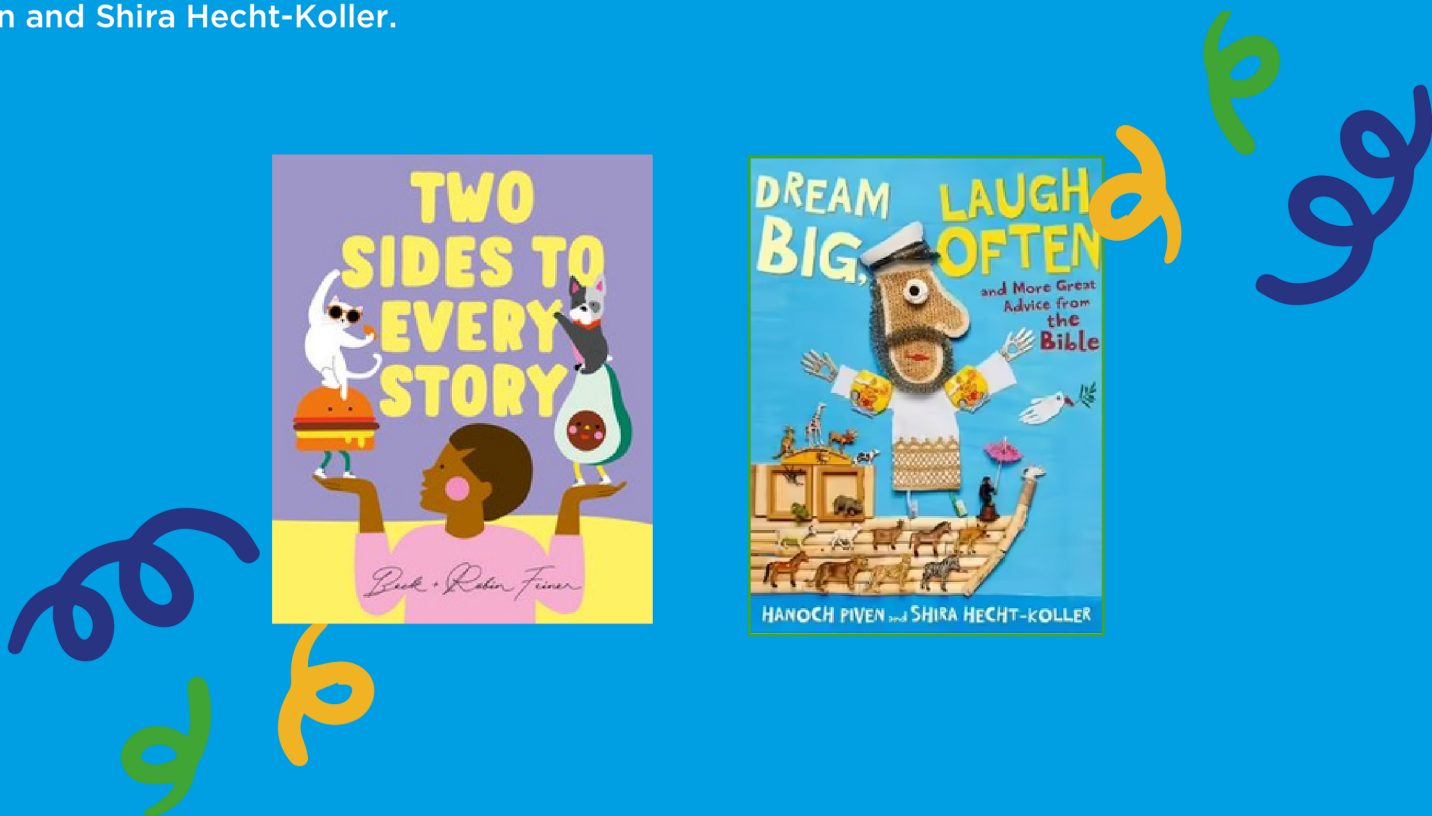
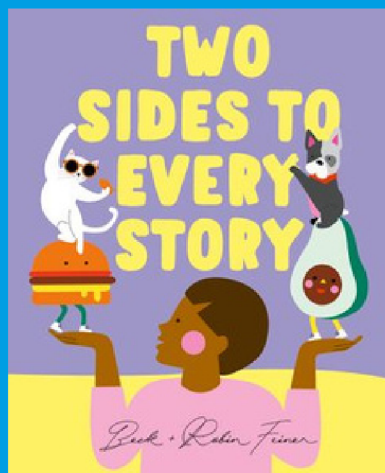
Yalagang Room.The Bondi Pavilion. 



# LITTLE LIT LOVERS

## KIDS PROGRAM DROP-OFF 5 - 8 YEARS

A hands-on kids workshop with PJ Library's Wendy Dolowitz and author and illustrator team Beck Feiner and Robin Feiner. This is a drop-off, supervised session for 5-8 year old kids. Each child will receive the PJ Library book, 'Dream Big, Laugh Often' by Hanoch Piven and Shira Hecht-Koller.





**Sunday 27 August 2023**

**6.00pm - 7.00pm**

**Theatre. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



*After Dark*

# FOURPLAY STRING QUARTET ALBUM LAUNCH

Beloved Australian band FourPlay String Quartet celebrate the release of their first vinyl album, a compilation titled 'A Taste Of...' and are thrilled to be performing at Sydney Jewish Writers Festival as part of their album release tour. Playing songs from almost three decades as a band, they bring their eclectic, electric sound to the Bondi Pavilion Theatre for the first time. They will also perform pieces from their collaborative album 'Signs of Life', written and recorded with award-winning author, Neil Gaiman, which debuted at #1 Billboard Charts in Classical Crossover. Don't miss FourPlay String Quartet, for what will be a stunning evening of lush, haunting and electrifying sound.



**Sunday 27 August 2023**

**7.30pm - 9.00pm**

**Theatre. The Bondi Pavilion.** 



*After Dark*

# THE GOD DESIRE: DAVID BADDIEL

David Baddiel in conversation with Dr Meredith Lake

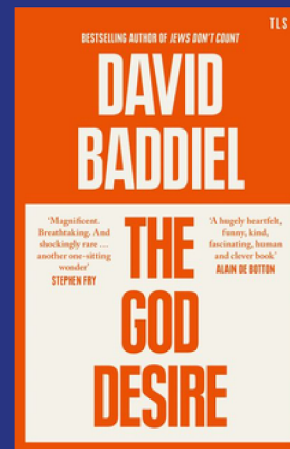
Closing Night with inimitable David Baddiel, British comedian, author, screenwriter, and television presenter. David joins the Sydney Jewish Writers Festival for the Australian book launch of his latest offering, 'The God Desire'. In 'The God Desire' Baddiel attempts to reconcile his lack of faith with his Jewish identity which places him in an intriguing position in an often-polarised debate.



**DAVID BADDIEL** is a comedian, author, screenwriter, television presenter and Jewish activist. Following the publication of his bestselling polemic 'Jews Don't Count', David has been at the forefront of tackling antisemitism in the media, sport, and more broadly, the progressive left. The book became The Sunday Times Politics and Current Affairs Book of the Year, 2021. (Photo credit: Steve Best\_Xavicus Media)



**DR MEREDITH LAKE** is a historian and broadcaster curious about the beliefs we hold and the practices that shape us. She is the author of the multi award winning history 'The Bible in Australia: a cultural history', and presenter of 'Soul Search', an ABC podcast about the lived experience of religion and spirituality.





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