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**BIG THEMES DRIVE PERTH FESTIVAL'S LITERATURE & IDEAS**

**Land. Money. Power. Sex**. These four big themes drive Perth Festival's 2020 **Literature & Ideas** program curated for the first time by **Sisonke Msimang**.

Novelists, social commentators, journalists and comedians come together to wrestle with the most pressing issues of our time in a program packed with all the things that matter. **Land. Money. Power. Sex**.

The weekend hub is once again at the University of Western Australia from 21-23 February with activities popping up all over town leading up to the weekend. These include the first-ever Australian ***Lit Crawl Perth*** showcasing local talents in special venues along Beaufort Street in Mount Lawley, the mobile book club ***A Bus, a Book & A Bite***, and events at **The Literature Centre** in Fremantle.

**Bruce Pascoe**, acclaimed author of *Dark Emu* and *Salt,* kicks off the 2020 **Literature & Ideas Weekend** in conversation with Noongar academic and musician **Dr Clint Bracknell** at the Octagon Theatre on 21 February. *Dark Emu* is a ground-breaking book which questions preconceived ideas of Australia's Aboriginal past and has topped bestseller lists since it was first published.

*Image: Beowulf Sheehan*

Superstar writer **Neil Gaiman,** left, the award-winning author of *Sandman, American Gods, The Ocean at the End of the Lane* and *Norse Mythology,* shares his stories in a captivating afternoon event at Perth Concert Hall on 23 February 2020. Neil is rare to Australia's shores and this event will be a highlight for book-lovers and fans of his television and movies, with works like *Coraline, American Gods and Good Omens (with Terry Pratchett)* having been adapted for television or the big screen

The weekend also includes our popular **Family Day** on 23 February, with a huge range of free activities including the interactive words-and-music adventure of ***Dumazi and the Big Yellow Lion*** led by **Matt Ottley**, **Valanga Khoza** and members of WASO in ***The Sound of Picture Books***. We will release more details on when we unveil the full program on 16 January.

Other Literature & Ideas highlights include **Melissa Lucashenko**, **Josephine Wilson** and **Charlotte Wood** discussing writing, money and the politics of prizes in ***Prize & Prejudice*** on 22 February**.** We're thrilled to have these three pillars of Australian writing, with between them decades of experience and accolades, in this highlight event.

In the first Perth edition of ***Story Club***, a themed live storytelling night, comedian **Ben Jenkins** hosts some of Australia's finest raconteurs including **Jane Caro**, **Matt Okine**, **Benjamin Law, Holden Sheppard** and **Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa**.

And our most clear-eyed thinkers will be riffing on the big topics of Sex, Power and Money in ***Unmoderated: The Gauntlet Series*** at the Octagon Theatre with **Rick Morton, Maria Tumarkin and Sanam Maher**. In this brand new mini-lecture series we ask these thinkers to throw down the gauntlet, to burst our bubble and unsettle our preconceptions.

Come listen, talk and play.

**We will announce the full Perth Festival Literature & Ideas program on 16 January 2020.**

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***Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar.***

***They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.***

***Perth Festival***

*Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, Perth Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia's premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 67 years, the Festival has welcomed to Perth some of the world's greatest living artists and now connects with hundreds of thousands of people each year.*

*Iain Grandage is the Artistic Director 2020–23.*

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