

GriffithReview 67  
Matters of Trust

Anne Tiernan, Alex Miller, Alex Markiewicz, Omar Sakr,  
Damon Young, Jenny Hocking, Glyn Davis, David Ritter,  
Sana Nakata & Sarah Maddison, Cameron Muir.

GriffithReview 68  
Getting On

Heien Garner, Andrew Stafford, Vicki Laveau-Harvie,  
Tony Birch, Melanie Cheng, Samuel Wagan Watson,  
Charlotte Wood, Gabbie Stroud, Sarah Holland-Batt.

GriffithReview 69  
The European Exchange

Christos Tsakos, Julianne van Loon, George Megalogenis,  
Gabriella Coslovich, Christian Thompson, Robyn Archer,  
Arnold Zable, Iris Mekler, Stuart Ward, Natasha Cica.

GriffithReview 70  
Generosities of Spirit

Claire G Coleman, Thomas Mayor, Kristina Olsson,  
Rhianna Boyle, Mikele Prestia, Adam Thompson,  
Kate Vetch, Linda Neil, Allannah Hunt, Joelle Gergis.



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

## GriffithReview

*Commercial in confidence*

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# Executive summary

In 2020, Griffith Review produced four editions exploring different facets of transformation – around trust, maturities, mortalities and ageing, the links and legacies between Australia and Europe, and generosity. Strategy and design for both its online publishing program and regular newsletters were refreshed, as were its social media strategies across all platforms.

A statistical overview of the year's activity is given below.

- Contributors **176** (+19%)
- Events **25** (+8%)
- Media placements **200** (+35%)
- Media audience reach **33.3 million+** (+300%)
- Media value **\$9m+** (+250%)
- Facebook **288k+** (+10%)
- Twitter **11k+** (+8%)
- Instagram **22k+** (+17%)
- Website **646k+** (+37%)
- Great Reads newsletter **5k+** (+18%)
- Audited sales and subscriptions **\$93k** (+7.7%)
- Total earned income (including additional income from foundations, fundraising and entry fees in addition to sales, but excluding grants and in-kind sponsorship) **\$213k+** (+56%)
- Funding partners included ANU, ANZSOG, Arts Queensland, Copyright Agency Cultural Fund, McLean Foundation, the Judith Neilson Institute, the Graeme Wood Foundation – and our primary partners, Griffith University and the Australia Council for the Arts
- Annual appeal **\$38k+** (+16% – the highest total since the appeal began in 2012).

# From the publisher



Twenty-twenty was a year like few others, but it was not completely unique.

‘There is nothing like a good plague to get the blood moving,’ Dr Norman Swan wrote in the first edition of *Griffith Review* in September 2003. *Insecurity in the New World Order* was published in response to seismic events that played out over the previous two years. Severe acute respiratory syndrome, the first of the twenty-first century coronaviruses to wreak havoc around the world, was just one of these crises. It triggered what Norman described as ‘a hard-wired human response: fear and blame, dread and outrage’.

The cycle of crisis had begun in Australia, before the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon, when the government of the day refused to allow 433 rescued Afghani-Hazara refugees to enter Australian waters. The captain of the Norwegian *MV Tampa* insisted that international law demanded he rescue them, but the government made political capital out of the heartbreaking plight of these refugees from a country that had already endured so much and was about to endure much more suffering.

This was the opening shot that ensured this century began as it has continued, shrouded in fear and insecurity rather than dressed in promise.

Looking back provides a useful reminder when trying to make sense of 2020. While events are unpredictable, crisis is hard to predict but rarely far away. Plague, war and ageing are constants of the human condition. As are the virtues of trust and generosity.

These were the big themes Griffith Review canvassed in our Year of Plague. Even the edition focused on the exchange of ideas and people between Europe and Australia gained an edge in this context – ancient plagues reshaped European civilisation. In the context of this most contemporary plague, as movement ceased and tens of thousands of people died, the edition’s co-editors, Ashley Hay and Natasha Cica, and their forty-four contributors had an unanticipated frame for thinking about this legacy.



That we had begun planning these editions well before the virus made its way from bat to human and then around the world was not due to unusual prescience, but the themes we had already selected did provide a unique opportunity to explore enduring issues with new urgency and with new virtual tools.

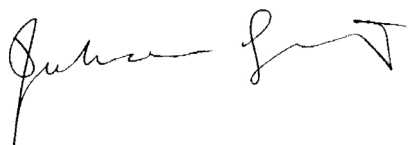
The Griffith Review team rose to the challenges of the year with good humour, determination and creativity. Despite working from home, changing our distributor mid-year and liaising with contributors all over the world, Ashley Hay and the team produced four very timely editions and online series, with enduring stories and reports that captured how it felt to live with plague and the climate catastrophe.

We in Australia were more fortunate than people in many other countries, where so many lost their lives and livelihoods, but the emotional, economic and physical toll was real and considerable. We were fortunate that, unusually, most leaders resisted the temptation to politicise the pandemic and infodemic that accompanied it.

In 2003 Norman Swan wrote: ‘These days accountability has increased but the ability of decision makers to act rationally has decreased. Loss aversion and the media have pushed them to caution and expediency. But even though there are risks in information, it’s better to have it than not, because the more out of control a person feels, the more risk is perceived. We will face new plagues and our psychological evolution will tend to make us overreact emotionally. There are no easy answers, as China is hopefully discovering belatedly, the first step in managing fear of the unknown is transparency. There is no substitute for openness.’

This was one lesson we learnt again in 2020. Politicians tried for a time to unlearn the habits of secrecy, turning up for daily briefings on television and whatever other platforms they could find. Still a lot remained under wraps. While journalists chased the news, and social media brimmed with rumour, disinformation and gossip, Griffith Review, as always, tried to go behind the story, to explore the emotional depths, the historical precedents, the big enduring lessons. Readers welcomed Griffith Review’s contribution to help make sense of momentous events, be alert to misinformation and celebrate the resilience of the human spirit. Writers are particularly important in these big moments. The insights Griffith Review shared, like Norman’s prescient remarks seventeen years ago, will hopefully endure and help us cope with the next crisis.

Twenty-twenty will be remembered as one of those long years in which nothing happened and everything happened, one that was over in a flash, but lingered endlessly. I trust that some of the memories and insights captured in the pages of *Griffith Review* and at **griffithreview.com** will keep the blood moving and keep us thinking and alert. Capturing the moment is an enduring contribution. There will always be another crisis.



Professor Julianne Schultz AM FAHA  
Publisher and Founding Editor, *Griffith Review*

# From the editor



In late 2019, we contacted our subscribers, our contributors, our broadest audience to share our plans for the coming year with them. ‘In 2020,’ we wrote, ‘Griffith Review is embracing ideas of transformation.’

Since Griffith Review began in 2003, with Professor Julianne Schultz, founding editor and current publisher, at its helm, a constant question has run through Australia’s thought leadership and literary conversations. How was it, people wondered, that Griffith Review always seemed to have its finger on the pulse in terms of themes, topics, zeitgeist, matters of the moment? How was it that Julianne managed to pick the right exploration to make at the right time – to not only ride a wave of public curiosity or change, but often to strike out ahead of it?

How indeed. As 2020 unfolded, as Griffith Review’s plans – like so many plans in the writing community, in tertiary institutions, in Australia and all over the world – transformed and were transformed again and again, that overarching tagline was more useful, more powerful, more apposite than anyone could have imagined. I can’t answer the question of how we came up with that year-long framework, or why, but I can celebrate the work we were able to do under its auspices as that clichédly ‘unprecedented’ year rolled on.

To say that 2020 was a year of transformation is now a profound understatement. In the two sectors in which Griffith Review resides – the literary and cultural landscape; the space of universities – that transformation was often brutal. By the reckoning of Universities Australia, at least 17,300 jobs had been lost across the tertiary sector by early 2021. By the reckoning of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the number of jobs in the arts and recreation services fell almost 13 per cent in the six months from mid-March 2020. Authors' incomes were now 'disastrously low', according to an Australian Society of Authors' submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Australia's creative and cultural industries and institutions later that year. As leading Australian author Charlotte Wood told that inquiry:

Covid is destroying the lives of writers in many ways – through the loss of their day jobs in lots of cases, but also by obliterating three major income streams for writers outside their books: public speaking, university teaching and freelance writing. JobKeeper is literally at the moment keeping many writers alive, and I don't know what will happen when it runs out... there was nothing in the government's Covid rescue package for writers who are not attached to organisations.

On the brink of announcing its next tranche of four-year funding early on in the pandemic, the Australia Council turned to ideas of emergency relief, cutting the budgets of all successful organisations for their first year under new funding arrangements (2021) to allow support to be extended to previously funded organisations who'd been unsuccessful in this next round. This is what arts organisations do, from the smallest, most localised levels up: they find ways of redividing and redeploying to share around what support there is.

In the absence of dedicated attention from JobKeeper – for tertiary or cultural sectors; for the myriad casual employees in both – further emergency funding opportunities for the creative sector came from the Australia Council, the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund, and state and local governments. Historians found Covid employment by researching and proposing street names for new suburbs. Writers became podcasters. Venues reinvented themselves as ongoing virtual festival spaces. The world changed; so many buttresses in this already precarious space fell away.

But so many things transformed and kept going.

The staff of Griffith Review went home in the third week of March 2020 – halfway through the on-sale cycle of our first edition for that year, *Griffith Review 67: Matters of Trust*. We made no long-term plans – we had no idea how long our offices would stand empty, how long it would be until we saw each other in person again. We set up our computers in our spare rooms, our studies, our living rooms and kitchens. Without much consultation with one another, we committed to business as usual – for our writers, our readers, ourselves.

We completed the production cycle of *Griffith Review 68: Getting On* as we left the building; we stepped straight into production of our most ambitious edition of 2020, *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange*, a powerful collection conceived of and co-edited in partnership with Dr Natasha Cica and published in partnership with the Australian National University: it featured well over forty contributors. We also undertook a comprehensive stocktake and stock transfer from Melbourne to Sydney as we moved from a highly successful publishing partnership with Text to a new distribution arrangement with NewSouth, which involved transferring books across closed borders in the middle of the year.

We scheduled events, rescheduled them, redesigned them and rescheduled them again. We initiated new online publishing and partnership programs to increase the number of writers we could support and work with. We navigated the change process undertaken by Griffith University through its commitment to a Roadmap to Sustainability. We dealt with vacancies during an institution-wide hiring freeze.

And amongst this, we celebrated. We celebrated Amy McQuire's win in the 2020 Clarion Awards for her powerful reportage work 'White justice, black suffering' from *Griffith Review 65: Crimes and Punishments*. We celebrated Tara June Winch winning the 2020 Miles Franklin Award – Tara is one of many prominent Australian writers whose emergent career was supported by early publication in *Griffith Review*. We celebrated publication of dozens of new books by contributors, many of which grew from work undertaken for editions of *Griffith Review* – from Cassandra Pybus' *Truganini* (from *Griffith Review 58: Storied Lives*) as the year opened to Rowena Lennox's *Dingo Bold* (from *Griffith Review 57: Perils of Populism*) as it closed.

We ended 2020 with the celebration of *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*, sent to press just before we came back into the office, in October, after six months off-site.

Throughout 2020, we saw spikes in single sales, in new and renewing subscriptions, in media reach, in bookseller support. Engagement across all our social media and newsletter platforms grew. We received and read well over a thousand submissions from Australia's emerging and established writers, across all genres and forms, and had the pleasure of working with more than 150 of them. Many appeared in our pages for the first time; some, in publishing with us, were being published for the first time anywhere.

Exactly a year after we left our offices in March 2020, as I sat down to write this overview, an email arrived from Professor Glyn Davis, Griffith Review's original champion as vice chancellor of Griffith University when the publication began in 2003, a contributor – most recently – to *Griffith Review 67: Matters of Trust*, and now CEO of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. 'Congratulations,' he wrote, 'on a fine run of issues for *Griffith Review*.'

It's been a long and tumultuous year for so many people in so many predictable and unpredictable ways. In the first months of 2021, a message like this one makes real the great work done – and the achievement – in committing to business as usual and seeing it through. It makes real the effort and the value of the work and the energy, generously given, to adapt, to respond, to expand; to provide new platforms for writers and more means of paying them; and to provide more words for more readers and more ways of sharing those words.

My great gratitude to the Griffith Review team for their commitment, camaraderie, professionalism and forbearance – and to everyone inside and beyond Griffith University who supported us through every cycle and through the curve balls that arrived. To the writers who kept working away, in quarantine, in isolation, in strange conditions and in parts of the world they hadn't expected to be in. To the subscribers who were so patient with the vagaries of deliveries and office hours and postal services. And to the many new readers who found us, liked what they found and signed up for another year.

Thank you all, and here's to 2021.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ashley Hay" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Associate Professor Ashley Hay  
Editor, Griffith Review

# Editions

## GriffithReview 67

### Matters of Trust

Anne Tieman, Alex Miller, Alex Mankiewicz, Omar Sakr, Damon Young, Jenny Hocking, Glyn Davis, David Ritter, Sana Nakata & Sarah Maddison, Cameron Muir.



### *Matters of Trust*

February

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In 2018, the Edelman Trust Barometer put Australians' trust in government at an all-time low. With the institutions that structure our lives – legal, educational, social, political – under increased strain, this edition examines an endpoint for a social structure that is no longer tenable or the beginning of a new era in which new forms of social organisation will arise from a gathering sense of crisis.

*Matters of Trust* examines the potentials that might arise as the world is remade around us. Published in partnership with the Australian and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

## GriffithReview 68

### Getting On

Helen Garner, Andrew Stafford, Vicki Laveau-Harvie, Tony Birch, Melanie Cheng, Samuel Wagan Watson, Charlotte Wood, Gabbie Stroud, Sarah Holland-Batt.



### *Getting On*

May

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In a world where seventy is the new fifty, old age isn't what it used to be.

As the proportion of older Australians continues to rise, the lived experience of everyone, be they in care or looking after an aged relative, will be intertwined intimately with the phenomenon of longer lives. But longevity brings with it urgent issues: postponing retirement, financing extended life, forging a society that can accommodate the needs of a majority older population with the dynamism of the young.

*Griffith Review 68: Getting On* takes a timely look at the question of how we age successfully – as individuals, as a society, as a population.



## GriffithReview 69

### The European Exchange

Christos Tsiolkas, Julianne van Loon, George Megalogenis, Gabriella Coslovich, Christian Thompson, Robyn Archer, Arnold Zable, Iris Makler, Stuart Ward, Natasha Cica.



### *The European Exchange*

August

With Europe thrown into sharp relief by a devastating pandemic, *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange* explores the deep and complex relationships between Europe and Australia, ongoing links and legacies, and the ways Australians of many backgrounds have contributed to a longstanding dialogue that enriches both continents.

Co-edited by Ashley Hay and Natasha Cica, *The European Exchange* features a powerful assemblage of new work from emerging and established writers, researchers and thinkers.

Published in partnership with the Australian National University.

## GriffithReview 70

### Generosities of Spirit

Claire G Coleman, Thomas Mayor, Kristina Olsson, Rhianna Boyle, Mikele Prestia, Adam Thompson, Kate Veitch, Linda Neil, Allanah Hunt, Joëlle Gergis.



### *Generosities of Spirit*

November

Griffith Review's annual showcase of the best new Australian writing celebrates stories of inner lives, resilience and potential realised.

This edition showcases the winners of 2020's Novella Project competition – Rhianna Boyle, Claire G Coleman, Mikele Prestia and Kate Veitch – alongside compelling new work from Adam Thompson, Thomas Mayor, Linda Neil, Allanah Hunt and Kristina Olsson and a selection of exciting Australian poets, including Jennifer Harrison, Tony Birch, Eileen Chong, Lisa Gorton and Mark O'Flynn. It also features climate scientist and IPCC lead author Joëlle Gergis introducing *The Elemental Summer*.



# Quarterly activities

## GriffithReview 67 Matters of Trust

Anne Tiernan, Alex Miller, Alex Mankiewicz, Omar Sakr, Damon Young, Jenny Hocking, Glyn Davis, David Ritter, Sana Nakata & Sarah Maddison, Cameron Muir.



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February–April 2020

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### *Griffith Review 67: Matters of Trust*

**Edited by Ashley Hay**

The thinking towards *Griffith Review 67: Matters of Trust* began in early 2019. It began with ideas of the necessity for optimism and improvisation in democracy. It began with questions about diminishing transparency around the world – and why this went against what had seemed, years earlier, like a positive trend in the other direction. It began in a space thick with royal commissions of inquiry: into the banking and finance industries, into the provision of aged care, into the institutional abuse of children. It sought to explore definitions of trust that spanned the intimate to the institutional.

Our publishing partnership with ANZSOG for this edition saw us feature work by ANZSOG's Dean and CEO Ken Smith and Chair of ANZSOG's Research Committee Glyn Davis, who is also CEO of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. It also included a beautiful meditation on

sanctuary in a digital world by former ANZSOG chief of staff David Threlfall. We're grateful to ANZSOG for their support of this important edition, both on the page and through events held to promote the collection.

It also featured powerful new writing by leading Griffith experts in their field: Anne Tiernan, Dean of Engagement for the Griffith Business School, writing on improvisation in democracy; AJ Brown, board member of Transparency International, writing on the evolution of international corruption; and Caitlin Byrne, Director of the Griffith Asia Institute, writing on soft diplomacy.

Cameron Muir's profile of Dr Alex Wodak, a leading advocate of drug reform laws, and the conversation between Sana Nakata and Sarah Maddison, founders and co-directors of Indigenous–Settler Relations Collaboration at the University of Melbourne, explored the powerful possibilities of reform from within – and despite – different systems and institutions. Alex Mankiewicz's graphic novella 'Ministry of truth, 20/20' explored ideas of invisibility in an overly image-based world.



While *Matters of Trust* was on sale, the global pandemic arrived. The spread of COVID-19 brought questions of trust to the fore in different ways. Was the rush for toilet paper, beans and pasta another barometric measure of declining trust in government, in leadership? If it was, Australia's levels of public trust may have been even lower than suspected: research from UNSW would later show that the country was one of those most affected by panic buying.

In this environment, conversations about trust garnered a new urgency – reflected in the strong support for the public events that were possible early in this publication cycle and in good retail sales.

The edition sought stories of change and reform. It sought optimism, epiphany and a sense of moving forward. It sought to report from the public service, various levels of government, hospitals and churches, from our families, our psyches and ourselves, to record how this 2020 future looked when we reached it and what the next transformations might bring.

No-one could have guessed the scope and scale of what came next.

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'I've loved what GR has put together so far on Covid – they're very human pieces, not hot takes. That's what GR has done so well...found a way past the veneer of things to their messy, bloody tendernesses.'

**Beejay Silcox**

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'[Griffith Review launches] at Avid are becoming something of a calendar event for many people... because people know a GR panel has become something very special – it's where brave ideas are aired, challenges are thrown down and robust debate is enabled under excellent moderation.'

**Sally Piper after the launch of *Matters of Trust***

Media value (ASR)

**\$2,850,536**

Audience (ASR)

**11,924,451**

Media placements

**88**

Including extracts, reviews  
and interviews.

This edition performed strongly in national media with a range of on-air interviews, reviews and extracts. Our Sydney-based publicist, Brendan Fredericks, ran a strategic and successful campaign and obtained significant media placements despite the media's focus on the emerging global pandemic during the three-month active promotion period. Anne Tiernan opened media coverage with a bespoke piece for *The Conversation*, stepping out from her lead essay in *Matters of Trust* and the Black Summer fires of 2019–20, and there was strong profile coverage of contributors to this edition, including Damon Young and Teela Reid, across the News Ltd papers.

The online publishing program – led by Teela Reid's powerful and adamant essay '2020: A year of reckoning, not reconciliation' and Nicholas Gruen's 'The competition delusion' – dovetailed with significant media coverage, including interviews on ABC-TV's *The Drum* and ABC-RN's *Future Tense*. These articles garnered over 5,000 page views on the Griffith Review website between them, and media reach, through radio and television interviews, of more than 250,000 people.

The consistently long tail of *Griffith Review* editions again wagged with a review of the edition from the last quarter of 2019 – *Griffith Review* 66: *The Light Ascending* – appearing in this first quarter of 2020. Ed Wright wrote in praise of this edition in *The Australian*: 'The richness of these stories is amplified by the resonances between them. It's hard to think of so much fascinating story being contained within 270-odd pages. It's a testament to the power of the novella and the curation of this particular collection.' And the long tail of *Griffith Review* 67: *Matters of Trust* also extended all the way to March 2020, when AJ Brown's commentary on integrity, the Canberra bubble and Brittany Higgins' allegations of assault in Parliament House brought this edition of *Griffith Review* back to an audience of more than 600,000 people across various ABC radio networks and platforms.

## Events

5

## Contributors

40

## Genres

8

Essays | Reportage |  
 Memoir | In Conversation |  
 Graphic Novella | Poetry |  
 Fiction | Podcast

The impacts of COVID-19 saw rapid adaptation and realignment of events planned in support of this edition: the signature panel hosted by Paul Barclay for ABC-RN's *Big Ideas* was recast and reconvened five times before finally being recorded on Zoom for subsequent broadcast, the first discussion recorded with panellists in different places in the show's history and the beginning of a long run of such events.

Paul Barclay described the conversation as 'a terrific big-picture discussion of trust in an age of coronavirus. The three speakers were so good – especially considering the entire topic changed after they wrote their essays. They are very thoughtful about where we are now...and where we might be headed.'

Live events in Hobart, Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne snuck just ahead of the pandemic, with a virtual panel discussion featuring *Griffith Review* 67 contributors Teela Reid, Omar Sakr and David Ritter recorded in October as part of the NT Writers Festival's remote program – the first collaboration between Griffith Review and this exciting festival.

With the timely arrival of Emma Reason to cover the role of marketing and events co-ordinator, Griffith Review was able to capitalise on the promotional possibilities of a strong program of online exclusives tied to *Matters of Trust* combined with the rollout of an occasional COVID-19 diary series, *Through the Window*, which had its first instalment published in late March. This was written by Griffith University Emeritus Professor Pat HOFFIE from New York. The boon of being able to draw on Emma's marketing and engagement expertise across social platforms and EDMs became more and more apparent as 2020 went on.

# Quarterly activities

## GriffithReview 68 Getting On

Helen Garner, Andrew Stafford, Vicki Laveau-Harvie,  
Tony Birch, Melanie Cheng, Samuel Wagan Watson,  
Charlotte Wood, Gabbie Stroud, Sarah Holland-Batt.



May–July 2020

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### *Griffith Review 68: Getting On*

**Edited by Ashley Hay**

A lot can change in a few short weeks. The editorial cycle for *Griffith Review 68: Getting On* spanned January and February, during which time several of our contributors confronted bushfire threats; one lost their home. The end of summer felt like it would close an unrepeatably shocking and dramatic period. But between early March, when *Getting On* was sent to print, and late April, when the edition was published, the Griffith Review office had been closed up, its team sent home to work remotely, and the year's ongoing dance of reimagining and recreating everything from events to operations in the face of COVID-19 had begun. A different shock; a global drama.

The tagline for this edition stepped off from the idea of seventy as the new fifty: how, it asked, does this change the experience of ageing? Its collection of stories had been conceived in the shadow of the latest in a long line of

inquiries into ageing in Australia (the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety) as an exploration of maturities and mortalities. Now, it found itself in a world where being older suddenly carried the sharp new health risk of COVID-19. Every question it asked – about getting older, about getting on with one another, about simply getting on with things – now sat in the context of the profound rupture and disruption of the pandemic. And conversations about aged-care quality and safety were about to take a brutal new turn.

Each edition of *Griffith Review* features a distinct suite of writers curated around the anchor of its theme. In *Getting On*, an extraordinary range of voices – established and emerging, younger and more experienced, many making their first appearance in *Griffith Review* – came together to explore ageing through the prisms of policy, research, science, medicine, technology, creativity, mourning, preparation, poetry, denial, resilience, solastalgia, sport – and love.





Despite COVID-19, despite the rupture of everything that happened in autumn 2020 in Australia, this book found – and continues to find – a broad and appreciative audience. The warmth of its many different voices spoke to many different people, celebrating a rich idea of so much life.

‘I have an honours degree in Literature, and I taught English for over a decade. I found Sarah Holland-Batt’s “Magical thinking and the aged care crisis” the most depressing piece of writing I’ve ever read in my life. It should be compulsory reading for every federal politician – and for every lobby group advocating for decreasing taxes – at a time when the Royal Commission into aged-care’s interim report was simply titled “Neglect”.’

**The Hon. Graham Perrett, Federal Member for Moreton**



Media value (ASR)

**\$3,722,244**

Audience (ASR)

**11,926,568**

Media placements

**41**

Including extracts, reviews  
and interviews.

This edition was promoted through various professional bodies, including the Australian Association for Gerontology (which praised the collection as ‘a rich mix of essays, reportage, poetry and more’ and ‘compelling explorations of ageing and the meaning of getting older’), the Australian and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine and the Sydney Institute of Palliative Medicine. Dr Frank Brennan’s essay exploring the personal aspects of palliative care was proposed as a teaching tool for medical students.

Sarah Holland-Batt’s powerful lead essay – written partly in response to the testimony she gave to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety – was subsequently referenced by one of the Royal Commission’s own consultation papers (‘Financing Aged Care: Consultation Paper No. 2’, June 2020, p. 10) and shared with the Federal Labor Opposition leadership team by the Hon. Graham Perrett.

The first media interview in support of this edition featured Ailsa Piper on ABC-RN’s *Life Matters*. This generous and moving conversation triggered an immediate response from its audience of more than 400,000: people began to buy books. Across the first two weeks of publication – and across subsequent interviews with other contributors – there were discernible spikes in sales and subscription orders following this coverage.

Print support for this edition was also strong. *The Guardian* carried an extract of Helen Garner’s lead essay, ‘The invisible arrow’, and the full text of Charlotte Wood’s ‘Experiments in the art of living’. Helen’s piece – published on 9 May – attracted an ASR audience of 3.68 million; Charlotte’s – published on 17 May – attracted a similar ASR audience and a 100 per cent engagement rate, ranking it as *The Guardian*’s number-one story beyond coronavirus coverage worldwide.

Media figures for this edition broke any recent Griffith Review records.



## Events

8

## Contributors

36

## Genres

8

Essays | Reportage | Memoir |  
In Conversation | Photo Essay |  
Poetry | Fiction | Podcast

The line-up of events for this edition collided squarely with COVID-19. Griffith Review held its first virtual launch through Avid Reader in May, featuring Ashley Hay (Brisbane), Tony Birch (Melbourne), Charlotte Wood (Cooma, NSW) and Vicki Laveau-Harvie (Sydney). For a literary organisation with a modest travel budget, there were clear advantages to working without the constraints of airfares and travel – and audience appreciation of this was measurable in registrations (more than 250), attendance in the live Zoom Room (147) and book sales through the store during this event. Avid reported that sales patterns for its events changed during COVID-19, building across the two weeks running up to and after virtual events. Sales of *Griffith Review* through Avid increased by more than 200 per cent on the previous edition, which had enjoyed an in-person launch attended by over a hundred people.

Two events (Newcastle Writers Festival and WOW Brisbane) set to celebrate this edition ahead of publication were cancelled. Events due to be held in person were reconceived as virtual conversations for festivals in the Yarra Valley (Ailsa Piper, Donna Ward, Charlotte Wood) and Canberra (Vicki Laveau-Harvie) – these prerecords aired on the originally programmed days (10 May and 13 August respectively), while Sydney (Andrew Stafford, Jane Goodall, Tony Birch) and Wollongong (featuring a rare panel conversation with Helen Garner and Vicki Laveau-Harvie in conversation with Ashley Hay) were recorded and broadcast later in the year. A session for the Rose Scott Women Writers' Festival (Therese Hall, Charlotte Wood) was live-streamed on 19 September.

Given the impossibility of in-person events, the Griffith Review Lightning Talk was redesigned for Griffith University Library Services as a podcast comprising two short, personal interviews with Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe and Professor Ingrid Burkett, director of The Yunus Centre. This was shared and promoted across Griffith Review and Griffith University Library Services platforms and networks.

The ABC received this email from one listener after the broadcast of the *Getting On* conversation on ABC-RN's *Big Ideas* featuring Sarah Holland-Batt, Melanie Cheng and Andrew Stafford: 'I must commend you on this outstanding podcast which really resonated with me at a time when Australia's ageing population deserves better end-of-life choices without fear and better care along the way.'

# Quarterly activities

## GriffithReview 69 The European Exchange

Christos Tsiolkas, Julianne van Loon, George Megalogenis, Gabriella Coslovich, Christian Thompson, Robyn Archer, Arnold Zable, Iris Makler, Stuart Ward, Natasha Cica.



August–October 2020

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### *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange*

**Edited by Ashley Hay and Natasha Cica**

*Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange* is the result of an exciting co-editorial relationship between Griffith Review Editor Dr Ashley Hay and Dr Natasha Cica, with the generous support of the Australian National University (ANU) as publishing partner.

Dr Cica is the founding director of the change consultancy Kapacity.org as well as an honorary professor at ANU, a former CEO of the Heide Museum of Modern Art, author of the award-winning *Pedder Dreaming* (UQP, 2011) and co-editor – with Professor Julianne Schultz – of an earlier highly successful edition of *Griffith Review, Tasmania – The Tipping Point?* (2013).

The co-editors first planned an edition exploring the links and legacies between Europe and Australia, and the ongoing intersections and exchanges of ideas and

conversations, more than a year prior to its publication in a now-lost space of easier travel and movement. It was a strange and sobering thing to bring it to fruition among ongoing COVID-19 separations and adaptations across Australia and around the world. *The European Exchange* was published on 3 August 2020, accompanied by a suite of exclusive online material, including powerful contributions from writers including Melissa Lucashenko, Kean Wong, Sally Wheeler and Tamara Thiessen.

ANU's generous support underwrote the assembly of a strong and exciting collection of established and emerging culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and other voices for this edition, including many first-time contributors – many who, in turn, found their lives mirroring issues the edition explored, a life lived across continents and hemispheres and now dramatically disconnected from one half of itself. These ideas and predicaments resonated with many readers who shared generous and appreciative feedback, as did the evolving exploration of how this south speaks to and connects with that north over the months the book has been in people's hands – and hearts.



Professor Sally Wheeler, Deputy Vice Chancellor (International Strategy) at ANU (far right), joins a panel discussion at the Canberra Writers Festival in support of *The European Exchange*. Griffith Review was excited to partner with ANU for this edition.

‘Such a strong, stimulating and rich collection of perspectives and voices. You have done an extraordinary job and created a book for our times. I’m so proud to be a small part of it.’

**Gabriella Coslovich**

‘GR is one of the only publications of its kind now with this kind of quality and attention to detail and marketing. It’s a privilege to be published in it.’

**Anthony Macris**





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# From the co-editor



The first question for panellists at the national launch of *The European Exchange* came from Germany's Ambassador to Australia, His Excellency Dr Thomas Fitschen:

*To what extent is the Australian perception of things 'European' (still) British-inspired? The variety of views and stories so brilliantly presented in Griffith Review 69 seems to indicate the opposite – but how representative is it?*

My answer is that *The European Exchange* is unusually representative of Australian perspectives many of us know and share and that are sidelined here more than they should be. The Ambassador's question illuminates a longstanding tendency in Australia to lazily conflate British with European. This imprecision reinforces exclusionary biases – structural, attitudinal, behavioural, cultural and linguistic – within Australian institutions and society. These biases have not been interrogated adequately, and many gatekeepers here remain surprisingly resistant to that happening.

It is remarkable that this should be the case, given the depth and breadth of the evolving exchange between Australia and Europe. That exchange dates back to the settler arrivals (mainly British, but far from exclusively so) predating the formation of the modern Australian nation at Federation. If we accept that contemporary Australia is a multicultural compact – and one that duly recognises, respects and rewards the full diversity of its human talent – this lack of attention is problematic. It impedes Australia's overdue reckoning with the cruelties of colonialism inflicted on Indigenous Australians, limits collaboration between people driving a wide range of justice agendas within Australia, and inhibits our understanding of how British (what, indeed, is Britain?) and wider European (what, indeed, is Europe?) identity and priorities are in a state of constant flux. Beyond questions of equity, this blind spot undermines Australia's strategic capacity to build 'smart sector' market share and advantage in our region and globally.



This issue of *Griffith Review* places the European dimensions of Australia's past, present and future in a clear spotlight. It provides a platform for the perspectives of over forty established and emerging thinkers, writers and creatives. They provide fresh insights into the tensions, partnerships, histories, fantasies and opportunities flowing from connections between Australia and Europe. These contributors have drawn on their lived experiences of negotiating professional agency, cultural legacy and often close family connections as well across the vast geographical distance separating these continents.

That distance has shape-shifted in some alarming ways since the arrival of COVID-19 in March 2020. Finalising their work for this issue, many contributors chose to engage with the dramatic and immediate consequences of the unfolding pandemic, which makes *The European Exchange* a unique snapshot of that challenging period. Other contributors framed their work against different arcs of narrative and meaning. This reminds us that this pivotal year sits in a larger and longer sweep of story – that makes the Australian and the European projects so dynamic and so compelling in connection.

At the time of writing, Australia's international borders remain effectively closed to Europe. Connected with this and assisted by its physical isolation, Australia currently also enjoys relative protection from the ravages of the pandemic, while Europe struggles with repeated waves of infection. It is difficult right now to imagine swift repatriation of the tens of thousands of Australians still stranded offshore, including in Europe, and including a number of contributors to this issue. This is a border challenge that applies in both directions, while Australia imposes strict legal and administrative restrictions on departure as well as arrival. It is even more difficult to scope longer term scenarios where people may again move across the distance between Australia and Europe as freely, and in such large numbers, as in pre-pandemic times. And it is impossible to predict the political, economic, social and cultural impact of the new isolationism that has gained traction in Australia in this confronting year. My own best hope is that *The European Exchange* may prove to be some kind of antidote.

W. Cica

Dr Natasha Cica

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Dr Natasha Cica is the founding director of Kapacity.org. She is a former CEO of Heide Museum of Modern Art and established the Inglis Clark Centre at the University of Tasmania.

Her publications include *Pedder Dreaming* (UQP, 2011), and she was co-editor of *Griffith Review 39: Tasmania – The Tipping Point* and *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange*.

She is an honorary professor at the Australian National University.

Media value (ASR)	Audience (ASR)	Media placements
\$2,364,206	8,596,225	54
		Including extracts, reviews and interviews.

The combination of Griffith Review's well-established connections with important Australian news and media outlets, a concerted and continuing media strategy, and Dr Natasha Cica's extensive networks and media experience saw this partnership edition achieve strong audience reach in a challenging media climate.

Publication of extracts in outlets including *The Guardian* and *The Conversation* combined with interviews on *Late Night Live* (ABC) and ABC radio more broadly delivered significant audience engagement and showcased a range of contributors and pieces. Griffith Review's ongoing partnership with ABC-RN's *Big Ideas* delivered another expansive and engaging conversation facilitated by Paul Barclay and featuring *Griffith Review 69* co-editor Natasha Cica alongside edition contributors Irris Makler and Christos Tsiolkas.

Two of Griffith Review's key metrics are media audience and ASR, and both saw exciting growth this year. Strong media support and engagement for the first two editions of 2020 saw these measures increase and ASR also remained strong through this most complicated quarter, which spanned the publishing period for *The European Exchange*. A committed and bespoke media approach delivered a solid result in terms of audience engagement, with ASR of \$2,364,206 and an audience of 8,596,225. These figures incorporate other Griffith Review media activity from the quarter, complementing extensive edition-specific reach.

Among a wide range of extracts, Christos Tsiolkas' powerful lead essay from *Griffith Review 69* was previewed and featured as the lead story in *The Australian's* weekend *Review* supplement as 'The ghosts are here to take their revenge', extending this article's reach and generating many supportive and enthusiastic comments – *The Australian's* literary editor Stephen Romei subsequently nominated *Griffith Review 69* as one of his books of the year. Support from CALD media came from an exciting range of broadcast and print quarters, including *Neos Kosmos*, SBS, *The Australian Jewish News* and *Kultur*, the magazine of the Goethe-Institut Australien. Many CALD media outlets across Australia do not have audience or ASR recorded through media monitors, with the result that their critical contribution to overall readership and value is not accurately represented in the figures given here. In light of this edition's focus on and commitment to celebrating and promoting European and CALD voices, lack of multilingual literacy presents an important and open question in the context of the current media landscape.

## Events

8

## Contributors

45

## Genres

8

Essays | Reportage | Memoir |  
In Conversation | Photo Essay |  
Poetry | Fiction | Podcast

Events for this third quarter of 2020 were most the complicated of the year in terms of planning and replanning; there was a continual sense of holding various options for every function in play at once, or making, abandoning and remaking every projected program several times over.

At the same time, opportunities could be seized to draw an exciting depth of internationally based contributors into many conversations and public programs, with Mat Schulz participating in the Brisbane launch event from Krakow, Stuart Ward participating in the national launch from Copenhagen and Irris Makler participating in the ABC-RN *Big Ideas* event from Jerusalem. While it is disappointing that festival uptake – and significant international event opportunities – could not be realised during the on-sale window for this edition, or in the foreseeable future, the ongoing support and recognition for this powerful collection will ensure it continues to find readers and contribute to conversations as the world remakes itself.

Most editions of *Griffith Review* enjoy a long tail of readership and coverage, and it is anticipated that this will be particularly true with this edition thanks to the ongoing involvement and commitment of Dr Natasha Cica. As Natasha wrote in the quarterly report covering this edition, ‘it is encouraging to see ongoing appetite for events exploring that question through a European/Australian lens, supported by external partners including the Whitlam Institute and the Goethe-Institut Australien.’ This includes two powerful conversations successfully held under the auspices of Goethe-Institut Australien in Melbourne (12 March, featuring Natasha in conversation with Arnold Zable and Emily Floyd) and Sydney (18 March, featuring Natasha in conversation with Julianne Schultz and Frank Bongiorno). Griffith Review was delighted by audience feedback for the latter that praised it as ‘the first conversation about Australia’s place in the world since Covid hit that engaged properly with key issues’.

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‘After reading some of these stories, particularly those very personal accounts that delve into topics and events in such a profound way that you feel like you’re living through it with the writer... I got to the end and feel really compelled to email them to say thanks for sharing their story, memoir, reportage, essay. That it moved me – or better still – educated me!’

**Jules Keith, Griffith University Development and Alumni Office**



# Quarterly activities

## GriffithReview 70 Generosities of Spirit

Claire G Coleman, Thomas Mayor, Kristina Olsson,  
Rhianna Boyle, Mikele Prestia, Adam Thompson,  
Kate Veitch, Linda Neil, Allanah Hunt, Joëlle Gergis.



voices in new work by Tony Birch, Claire G Coleman, Allanah Hunt, Thomas Mayor and Adam Thompson; and the opening piece, by Joëlle Gergis, in the innovative Elemental Summer series – read like differently coloured and separately remarkable offerings that combined, like the glass-stoppered jars in Zhang’s *Slosh Samples #2*, into a glorious whole.

Booksellers embraced the cover, with bespoke postcards distributed to twenty-five bookshops nationwide. Readers embraced the words, with strong sales delivering a three-year peak in subs numbers and an increase of 180 per cent on numbers from February 2020. Individual writers received glowing feedback, as did the primarily online Elemental Summer series (supported by McLean Foundation) and the book as a whole.

Yvette Holt, chair of the First Nations Australia Writers Network, contacted us to let us know the editing of this edition was simply ‘terrific’. It was a beautiful endorsement with which to round out an extraordinary year.

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November 2020–January 2021

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## *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*

**Edited by Ashley Hay**

One of the abiding narratives about Griffith Review is its uncanny capacity to create editions that pick up and refract the zeitgeist, the matters of moment. In the case of *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*, the theme, the title and the cover image were all exactly what were needed at the end of the long and hard year that was 2020. The artwork, by Louise Zhang, not only provided a gorgeous metaphor for the internal structure of the book – aliquots of so many different voices and narratives – but also worked as a stunning image. The title felt like the breath everyone needed to take and the sense people wanted to lean into.

The combination of voices – including the four winners of the final Novella Project, thanks to the Copyright Agency’s Cultural Fund and judges Angela Meyer, Mirandi Riwoe and Holden Sheppard; an exciting suite of First Nations



Novella Project winners Rhiannon Boyle (far left) and Kate Veitch (far right) join Griffith Review Queensland Writing Fellows Allanah Hunt (centre left) and Kristina Olsson (centre right) to launch *Generosities of Spirit* at Avid Reader in Brisbane in early November.

Love what you're doing with [*Griffith*] *Review*.  
 'Leaving Coonabarrabran' [from *The Elemental Summer*] was one of the best essays I've ever read.  
**US-based Australian novelist Geraldine Brooks**



Media value (ASR)

**\$240,214**

Audience (ASR)

**910,192**

Media placements

**17**

Including extracts, reviews  
and interviews.

Griffith Review's final edition for 2020 was well supported and promoted by booksellers, including Brisbane's Avid Reader, Sydney's Gleebooks and Abbey's, Melbourne's Readings Carlton, Perth's Boffins Books and Hobart's Fullers, among dozens of others. This collection received warm praise and appreciation from readers and glowing reviews by regular literary bloggers – including Cass Moriarty, who described it as a book 'I urge you to buy, read and share'. Targeted marketing – in ArtsHub and *The Conversation* as well as in crucial Christmas catalogues – was also employed to encourage greater reader reach. *The Australian Financial Review* ran Thomas Mayor's beautiful meditation, 'When the heart speaks', in its weekend colour supplement in full.

With the release of so many titles in the run-up towards Christmas, media coverage and event programming for this November edition are always difficult, and 2020 proved no exception – particularly with the later release of titles delayed by COVID-19 and the ongoing complications and exhaustions of the pandemic and its lockdowns. Griffith Review was fortunate to be able to augment its print edition with a new series, The Elemental Summer, which opened with a powerful and moving essay by Joëlle Gergis in *Griffith Review* 70 followed by nine new pieces of work published online between November and late January. This series increased opportunities for engagement across all social media platforms and event coverage, resulting in a new fourth-quarter collaboration between Griffith Review and ABC-RN's *Big Ideas*. This conversation was broadcast in the first quarter of 2021, with an audience reach of more than 660,000. Extra reach was also secured by a broadcast interview off the back of a contribution to the online Through the Window series that addressed the 2020 US presidential election.

With its combination of a beautiful cover, the signature high-standard scope and quality of writing, and an audience hungry to explore the generosities of spirit that had been on display throughout 2020, this edition found an overall media audience reach of just over 910,000, with a corresponding media value in excess of \$240,000. These levels – while significantly up on figures for the same quarter in earlier years – are significantly down on the other three quarters of 2020. Accordingly, Griffith Review will continue to monitor changes in the media landscape carefully into 2021 to weigh seasonal constraints and the known impacts of COVID-19 against any early indications of long-term changes and adjust media and engagement strategies accordingly.

## Events

4

## Contributors

28

## Genres

5

Novellas | Essays | Memoir |  
Poetry | Short Fiction

The impact of the first eleven months of 2020 – and the various adaptations and recalibrations that had been required, particularly around public programming – was palpable in the fourth quarter of the year. And while audiences were ready to embrace the next possibility of room/Zoom events – with numbers of up to fifty people allowed to gather in some venues – the impact of the capacity required to manage business as usual in those preceding months was certainly starting to bite.

Griffith Review was delighted to celebrate the launch of its final Novella Project with Nicola Evans from the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund, the project's partner, in the room at Avid Reader for the first live event Griffith Review had held since early March. This exciting conversation – expertly designed and facilitated by Griffith Review Managing Editor John Tague – featured two of the novella winners (Kate Veitch and Rhianna Boyle) alongside two Griffith Review Queensland Writing Fellows, funded by Arts Queensland (Kristina Olsson and Linda Neil). This was followed, in mid-December, with a fourth instalment of the partnership between ABC-RN's *Big Ideas* and Griffith Review, as Paul Barclay welcomed a significant audience back into Avid for a conversation inspired by Griffith Review's new online initiative, The Elemental Summer.

This marks the first time Griffith Review has partnered with *Big Ideas* across all four quarters – an exciting achievement in a year of many moments of minimisation and make-do.

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Kristina Olsson's 'Invisible histories' received great praise from several readers. One contacted her to say 'Just read your amazing piece in *GR*. My god, you're a great writer. So evocative and poignant. Beautiful.' Another wrote: '[Your] *GR* piece just blew me away. Honestly, so so good. Perfect combination of history, geology and personal anecdotes.'



# Online publishing program

The online publication program for 2020 began powerfully with Teela Reid's stunning online exclusive '2020: The year of reckoning, not reconciliation', published just ahead of 26 January and the release of *Griffith Review 67: Matters of Trust*. This immediately ranked as one of Griffith Review's strongest pieces in terms of online engagement, with just under 14,000 page views in its first six months. It also received significant media attention, with a subsequent *Sun-Herald* feature on Teela and the Voice campaign. Other online contributions for *Matters of Trust* came from Nicholas Gruen (unpacking ideas of competition), Rachel Ankeny (on trust and science) and Anita Heiss (on learning the Wiradjuri language).

This first quarter also saw the introduction of Through the Window, an occasional online exclusive series published through the weekly Great Reads newsletter. While this work was originally funded internally, Griffith Review was grateful to receive its first funding from the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas under funding released to support freelance writers during Covid, allowing the series to be continued and expanded. Through the Window became one of our most successful online engagement and reader-recruitment tools across the following months.

The original concept for this series was to provide an opportunity for writers to explore their first responses to and experiences of the COVID-19 crisis – and to find a way of paying more writers for their work beyond Griffith Review's four quarterly editions. The series launched with a powerful despatch by Pat Hoffie from New York, which had over 1,000 page views in its first month of publication, and closed with an extraordinary reflection by Rachel Maher on her experience of the pandemic across Athens, Melbourne and Kabul. Other contributors included Alison Whittaker, Jessica White, Michael F Good, Jacinta Koolmatrice, Wing Kuan, Andrew Broertjes, Mark Pesce and Sarah Ayoub.

Griffith Review's commitment to online publishing continued to grow through the second quarter, requiring a significant uptick in terms of what was asked of the small team – working remotely by this stage – and trying to maximise digital engagement with audiences while the change topography of the nation's events landscape came into focus. Online exclusives for *Griffith Review 68: Getting On* launched with an exclusive conversation between prominent American anti-ageism advocate Ashton Applewhite and Marlene Krasovitsky, Campaign Director, Older Australians for The Benevolent Society.

## Contributors

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For the final time, the online program for *Griffith Review 68: Getting On* drew work from the large pool of general submissions made in response to the edition call-out. This model essentially replicates the content in the book with similarly themed and structured content on the web, and the success of and response to the more bespoke approach of *Through the Window* encouraged a rethink for more intentional commissioning in the online space – sometimes in ways that intersect with the print edition, but sometimes as a separate entity. Exclusive pieces published to support *Getting On* included new work by Sara Dowse, Meryl Broughton, Kylie Ladd, Cate Kennedy and Donna Ward.

The suite of online exclusives for *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange* was designed with particular consideration by Dr Natasha Cica and the Griffith Review editorial team to expand the conversation in the book in terms of on-point themes and topics and to maximise the reach and impact of writers who are active and attractive in the online space.

The series opened with a strong piece by Sally Wheeler (ANU) considering Covid-driven border closures through the prism of human rights and the vast difference between expectations in this space in Europe and Australia. This piece became the springboard for Professor Wheeler's participation in a session of the Canberra Writers Festival and also fed into the design of a later event with the Whitlam Centre at Western Sydney University.

Subsequent pieces included award-winning Bundjalung writer Melissa Lucashenko unpacking her Russian heritage, Tamara Thiessen's meditation on the differences between her childhood in Australia and her adopted home of France, and new work by Kean Wong drawing on Kean's unique perspectives of modernism through his peripatetic life across Sydney, Malaysia, Scandinavia, Germany and America. This anchored the series' end to the imminent US election.

This intentional combination of the topical, personal, publication-connected and intellectual drew on the particular expertise of Natasha Cica and was critical in augmenting the range and scope of the print edition in the complicated media landscape of the second half of 2020. It brought the breadth of the collection's thinking and themes to a broader online audience.

Beyond *The European Exchange*, Griffith Review's online features from late September were focused on NAIDOC week (9–13 November), with a powerful new piece on sovereignty by Teela Reid generating significant interest and coverage and a long essay on the 1966 Wave Hill walk-off by Thomas Mayor published to coincide with the third anniversary of the government's rejection of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. These works spoke powerfully to each other and linked to new work by Mayor and others that was in preparation for *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*.

Griffith Review was proud to continue its partnership with State Library of Queensland by providing editorial support and online publication for the winner of the 2020 Queensland Young Writers Award, Ellen Vickerman, and her extraordinary story 'Unit K13: Life and unrelated studies'.

Online exclusives performed well in terms of the most read articles for Griffith Review across 2020 – in part, this is testament to the power and quality of the work itself, but it is also important to note that this work is often more heavily promoted across social platforms, as the work that is freely available in front of the paywall and published on a shorter cycle than the quarterly cycle of the book. It will be interesting to monitor the impacts of recent changes to the website access – offering three articles per month for non-subscribers and longer ‘grabs’ for locked articles after that to try to draw readers to keep reading and to subscribe – in terms of levels of engagement with print-edition work as well as work that is available freely.

For seventeen years, Griffith Review’s publication cycle has seen it go quiet over the summer months, with a book on sale in November and the journal shutting down in line with university closures and Australia’s summer holiday. The inadequacy of this, as a journal committed to coverage of the climate catastrophe, was made clear by the fires of the 2019–20 summer. In response to this, and thanks to support and encouragement from McLean Foundation, Griffith Review designed a rolling online series, The Elemental Summer, to cover whatever circumstances the 2020–20 summer delivered – with a combination of longer and shorter work and the capacity for writers to respond much more rapidly to changing circumstances and deliver more up-to-the-minute responses.

The series’ structure allowed for a necessary element of forward planning to be combined with a more spontaneous responsiveness, with work pinned to a number of themes (water, air, fire, land, solstice, new year, heat, movement and systems). It was launched and anchored by a moving and passionate personal essay by prominent author and climate researcher – and IPCC Report lead author – Joëlle Gergis in *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit* that explored Gergis’ own response to her work in this space as well as the extraordinary altruism of the scientists whose research feeds into the international project of climate science.

The original design of the series featured a closing anchor piece in *Griffith Review 71: Remaking the Balance* the following February, but the opportunity of ending with a stunning meditation by Bruce Pascoe published online just ahead of 26 January 2021 provided a much better full stop for the project.

Thanks to critical work by Senior Editor Carody Culver and Marketing and Events Co-ordinator Emma Reason, in combination with Drive Digital and external editor Sonia Ulliana, the roll-out of this series in Griffith Review’s regular downtime was completely seamless, bringing readers to a dedicated landing page and flagging the work in the series that was still to come. Targeted EDMs replaced our regular Great Reads newsletters to alert readers to new content – there was a small spike in unsubscription rates towards the end of the series, which may have indicated readers’ preferences for writing on a range of topics rather than a longer series on one theme.

The suite of emerging and established writers involved in The Elemental Summer comprised scientists, novelists, journalists and academics, creating a beautiful conversation between voices and styles as well as the powerful points made by each of the pieces. This impressive rollcall comprised James Bradley, Joëlle Gergis, Rebecca Giggis, Susan Harris-Rimmer, Nicole Hasham, Zoë Loh, Jasmin McGaughey, Bruce Pascoe, Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick and Tyson Yunkaporta.

Reader feedback was enthusiastic via social platforms and direct engagement with the writers and Griffith Review. Paula McLean from McLean Foundation (which supported this initiative) was particularly moved by the potential of Joëlle Gergis’ piece as an educational tool for secondary students and by the power of Bruce Pascoe’s piece to make her see the realities of her own landscape anew. Internationally acclaimed Australian novelist Geraldine Brooks enthusiastically promoted and endorsed Susan Harris Rimmer’s ‘Leaving Coonabarabran’ across social media.

The regular Great Reads newsletter was also renovated earlier in 2020 by Senior Editor Carody Culver, who suggested bringing reading recommendations in-house and flipping the newsletter design so that links to writing from *Griffith Review* appeared at the top and links to articles of interest from other publications, in Australia and beyond, appeared below. Newsletter subscriptions enjoyed an increase of around 17 per cent across the year, an impressive result in light of the busyness of the EDM space during long periods of lockdown and the refreshed approaches taken by Griffith Review's online programming.

A bespoke edition of Great Reads was produced for the Council for Economic Development Australia in early 2020 with hopes of an ongoing partnership in this space. This opportunity has not yet been revisited – one of the many results of the pandemic's interruptions.

### Most read online from 2020 – new work

Author	Title	Article type	Date
Teela Reid	2020: Year of reckoning, not reconciliation, <i>GR67: Matters of Trust</i>	online exclusive	January 2020
Nicholas Gruen	The competition delusion, <i>GR67: Matters of Trust</i>	online exclusive	February 2020
Teela Reid	The heart of seeding First Nations' sovereignty, <i>GR69: The European Exchange</i>	online exclusive	September 2020
Irris Makler	The kindness of strangers, <i>GR69: The European Exchange</i>		August 2020
Sarah Holland-Batt	Magical thinking and the aged care crisis, <i>GR68: Getting On</i>		May 2020

### Most read online work during 2020 – including archives

Author	Title	Article type	Date
Bruce Pascoe	Andrew Bolt's disappointment, <i>GR36: What is Australia For?</i>		May 2012
Teela Reid	2020: The year of reckoning, not reconciliation, <i>GR67: Matters of Trust</i> lead	online exclusive	January 2020
Elizabeth Hanscombe	In my father's house, <i>GR40: Women and Power</i>		May 2013
Yen-Rong Wong	The trauma of discipline, <i>GR65: Crimes and Punishments</i>		August 2019
Nicholas Gruen	The competition delusion, <i>GR67: Matters of Trust</i>	online exclusive	February 2020

# Partnerships and funding

The high point of 2020 for Griffith Review was the news, in early April, that it had been successful in the highly competitive multi-year funding round offered by the Australia Council. Griffith Review was the only extant literary journal to receive funding in this round – a testament to its critical place in the architecture of the Australian literary community and the clarity of its artistic and strategic vision, but also a sad indictment on the overall amount of funding allocated to the literary sector Australia-wide. This funding will underwrite Griffith Review's editorial budget from 2021 through to 2024, with an increase of its annual allocation across years two, three and four of this period from \$100,000 pa to \$150,000. This funding supports writers' work and its promotion through professional development and other public programming opportunities, and we are incredibly grateful to the large team who supported the creation of this application, within and beyond Griffith University, and to the peers of the Australia Council for their support of our vision and planning.

Details of partners and funding entities that supported Griffith Review throughout 2020 follow.

## Australia Council of the Arts



In 2020, Griffith Review operated with the last year of support under the Australia Council for the Arts' Four-Year Funded Organisations program. Final acquittals will be made in April 2021, including by submission of this annual report, and Griffith Review thanks the Australia Council for their guidance around pre-planning for the next tranche of four-year funding and for the opportunity to meet with many other representatives from the literary sector in the long conversations about the low success rate of literature in the 2020 four-year funding round.

## Australian National University



Australian  
National  
University

The Australian National University generously supported *The European Exchange* as publishing partner through the ANU Australian Studies Institute and the ANU College of Law. This partnership was brokered, secured and shepherded by edition co-editor Dr Natasha Cica, an invaluable source of wisdom, guidance and cultural capacity in this collaborative space. Beyond providing vital financial support, this partnership positioned this edition of *Griffith Review* within national discussions about Australia's place in the wider world. Particular thanks to Professor Sally Wheeler, Deputy Vice Chancellor (International Strategy) and Dean of the ANU College of Law, for her enthusiasm and practical support for this venture throughout and for her own contribution to both its content and program of events.

## ANSZOG

## ANZSOG

Griffith Review was delighted to partner with the Australian and New Zealand School of Government to publish its first edition for 2021, *Matters of Trust*. This partnership built on a long association between ANZSOG and Griffith University, particularly via Griffith Business School and the Policy Innovation Hub, and ANZSOG CEO Ken Smith was an enthusiastic champion of both the edition itself and the event and promotional possibilities beyond it. A popular lunchtime conversation in Melbourne – featuring Ken alongside two other contributors (Kate Griffiths and Sarah Maddison) – explored questions of trust and governance in the context of the Australian Public Service for a targeted audience from this space. This was the final in-person event that it was possible to deliver for the following six months, and Griffith Review is incredibly grateful to ANZSOG for their understanding and generosity around so many changed, suspended and upended promotional plans for this edition.

## McLean Foundation



McLean Foundation, previous partners (alongside The Nature Conservancy) in *Griffith Review 63: Writing the Country*, approached Griffith Review in the wake of the Black Summer of 2019–20 to discuss possibilities for timely coverage of the climate catastrophe in the subsequent summer season. In response to their invitation, Griffith Review designed an ambitious publishing program – primarily online, with strong event coverage and support for external editing – to run from November 2020 through to January 2021. Under the editorship of Ashley Hay, Griffith Review has determined to include coverage of the climate emergency in all of its editions, irrespective of theme, in acknowledgement of the fundamental and existential nature of this ongoing crisis. Thanks to the generosity and confidence of McLean Foundation, this series was curated and promoted with ongoing adaptation to possibilities.



## Copyright Agency Cultural Fund



Throughout 2020, Griffith Review operated a number of projects with support from the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund and also successfully applied for two other projects to be initiated and delivered throughout 2021. Extant programs included The Novella Project VIII (supporting work published in *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*), the final instalment of a three-year cycle, and the first piece generated by the Griffith Review Reportage Project (supporting an extraordinarily powerful piece of investigative work about the interface between reduced capacity and voluntary assisted dying by Andrew Stafford, published in *Griffith Review 68: Getting On*).

Two rounds of funding secured through 2020 call-outs will underwrite the creation of new work during 2021. The first of these will be commissioned by Grace Lucas-Pennington as part of Unsettling the Status Quo, a commissioning editor mentorship inviting Grace to commission work from First Nations writers to be included in each of the journal's four print editions throughout 2021. And a new competition for Emerging Writers supported by the Cultural Fund opened in early 2021, with winners to be judged by the Griffith Review editorial team alongside publishers Rachel Bin Salleh (Magabala Books), Aviva Tuffield (UQP) and Robert Watkins (Ultimo).

## Arts Queensland



The final tranche of Griffith Review Queensland Writing Fellows funded under two-year Arts Queensland funding was awarded to Allanah Hunt, Ian Lowe, Linda Neil, Kristina Olsson, Jessica White and David Thomas Henry Wright in 2019. Due to the programming of editions, the first three of these works (by Allanah Hunt, Kris Olsson and Linda Neil) were published in *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*, published in November 2020, with subsequent work to be published by the other authors across the 2021 editions.

## State Library of Queensland



Griffith Review was delighted to extend its partnership with State Library of Queensland to extend the two internships for the black&write! editorial interns – Allanah Hunt and Jasmin McGaughey – during 2020, working on new writing by Claire G Coleman. The partnership agreement also enabled a successful application to the Copyright Agency’s Cultural Fund to support a commissioning editorial mentorship for Grace Lucas-Pennington, editorial director of black&write!, and to continue Griffith Review’s commitment to publishing the winner of the annual Queensland Young Writers Award online. Other possible partnership outcomes, including co-operation on events, were moved forward to accommodate the exigencies of Covid.

## Varuna, The Writers’ House | Graeme Wood Foundation



Thanks to funding from the Graeme Wood Foundation, Griffith Review proudly partnered with Varuna, The Writers’ House, to offer week-long residencies for authors to develop a work in progress. In 2020, the recipients were Hannah Holland, Phillipa McGuinness, Cate Kennedy, Megan McGrath and Amanda Niehaus. Further strategic partnerships have also been pursued with Varuna in terms of cementing Griffith Review’s position within Australia’s literary ecology as a natural home for emerging writers – participants in Varuna’s Writing Fire, Writing Drought fellowships received manuscript appraisal from Griffith Review Editor Ashley Hay. Conversations are now underway to explore deeper relationships through mentoring, masterclasses and fellowships with Varuna going forward and expanded partnership possibilities with Graeme Wood Foundation.

## Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas



Griffith Review was successful in its first funding application to the Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas (JNI), applying for funding under the JNI’s freelance fund in response to the impacts of COVID-19 on the arts and cultural sector. This support enabled the Through the Window online series to be continued and built beyond its original contributors, with support for a subsequent ten instalments from May–November.

# Social media and marketing

The constantly transforming impact of the pandemic made digital connection and social media a more important tool than ever in terms of publishing, marketing, publicity and audience connection. Griffith Review was fortunate to have Emma Reason come into the position of Marketing and Events Co-ordinator in a casual capacity between February–April and again August–December: Emma’s skills and experience in this area were invaluable as Griffith Review adapted and transformed programs and approaches across the year. Her astute monitoring and reporting around uptake and impact across all social media platforms as well as website traffic and EDMs allowed us to respond to and target new initiatives in a far more strategic fashion, and we were particularly grateful for her insights and suggestions around promoting our renovated online offerings (Through the Window and The Elemental Summer) and electronic communication tools (Great Reads and the attendant suite of newsletters).

There was strong growth in terms of followers and engagement across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and an impressive growth of 18 per cent in subscriptions to our newsletters. (Earlier reports included total numbers of subscribers in the newsletter database – including some who had unsubscribed; 2019 numbers have been adjusted here, and only active subscribers will be reported going forward. The percentage increase given is for active subscriptions across this twelve-month reporting period.)

Traffic from organic searches grew steadily over the year, a credible result considering the limitations of the existing website with regard to search engine optimisation (SEO). A new website, optimised for SEO and with diligent back-end tagging, keywords and snippets, should significantly boost website visitors. In early 2021, Griffith Review also entered a partnership with Griffith University Library Services to mint doi links for each published article going forward. This will connect Griffith Review content to a wider web of search engines and possible citations/take-up.

Our new strategic efforts across the social channels – boosting advertising spend to reach new audiences coupled with front-of-paywall online content from Through the Window and The Elemental Summer – resulted in a 200 per cent increase in traffic to the website from social media platforms. In terms of maximising this exciting result, our priorities for 2021 include a focus on a new/improved website and addressing the bounce rate of many visitors and the pathways we offer them to explore more deeply beyond the first website page to spark their curiosity.

In terms of new initiatives and their success through the different platforms, we saw an exciting correlation between Through the Window and engagement on Facebook – starting with the first instalment, a moving report from the Covid frontline in New York by Griffith University Emeritus Professor Pat Hoffie. During the second quarter, in support of *Griffith Review 68: Getting On*, we trialled a series of short videos from contributors – introducing people to their work in the collection and reading a short extract – and this drove very strong engagement across Facebook in the first two on-sale weeks, particularly through videos by Ailsa Piper, Charlotte Wood and Gabbie Stroud. In light of the performance of five videos in total, we will review this approach with future editions in 2021, spreading their release across a longer timeframe to keep audience engagement at higher levels. We also approached writers to ‘blurb’ individual pieces in the edition, with James Bradley endorsing Glenn A Albrecht, Tegan Bennett Daylight endorsing Helen Garner and Holly Ringland endorsing Vicki Laveau-Harvie. We used these quotes throughout the year to support both the on-sale window of the edition and subsequent events – in particular the Wollongong Writers Festival panel discussion between Helen and Vicki held in late November.

Some of the most successful engagement for our Elemental Summer pieces came from other writers, with enthusiastic responses for this suite of work from high-profile authors in Australia and internationally. There was also strong support – and sharing – across all social platforms for our call-outs, particularly around our new emerging writers’ competition opportunity, which was announced at the very end of this reporting period, in early January 2021.

Our weekly newsletter, Great Reads, has also been widely shared and endorsed by our audience – and we’ve also noticed interesting engagement patterns with the links/stories contained in the EDM itself. The newsletter is distributed around lunchtime Friday, but many people access and read the stories it contains across the weekend or into the following week. We’ve adjusted our internal reporting on these stats as a consequence, as readership/engagement change significantly across each seven-day period.

	2019	2020	Change (%)
Twitter followers	10,875	11,739	+8%
Facebook page likes	5,312	5,824	+10%
Facebook reach	262,419	288,566	+10%
Instagram followers	1,746	2,034	+17%
Newsletter reach (subscribers)	4,542	5,340	+18%
Website traffic	470,782	646,529	+37%
Website traffic from organic search	150,391	169,312	+13%
Website traffic from social media	36,936	111,744	+200%





# Engagement

While Griffith Review exists as one of Griffith University's most prominent and well-established external-facing engagement tools, it also works in significant engagement spaces that arise within the university, with its own writing community and the broader Australian literary ecology, with its readers and the broader Australian thought leadership space, and with its supporters and champions of all kinds.

Relationships with the writing community grow from its highly regarded editorial process, and Griffith Review leaves 2020 with a renewed focus on planning for a renovated/augmented Contributors Circle program to increase opportunities available through this platform and to build the capacity of writers to enter Griffith Review's readership base – and more ambassadorial roles – beyond the issue in which their work features. Beginning with *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*, all contributors are mailed a print edition of the subsequent collection to encourage interest and readership beyond the single-theme focus of their first engagement with us.

Increased engagement with writers in the form of mentorship opportunities is also under investigation following Ashley Hay's involvement as a mentor with the recipients of Varuna's Writing Fire, Writing Drought fellowship program. Griffith Review's own residency partnership with Varuna, supported by the Graeme Wood Foundation, is also being reviewed with a view to offering augmented residency programs, mentoring opportunities and masterclasses.


The bread-and-butter of Griffith Review's ongoing engagement with readers is its weekly Great Reads newsletter, which was reformatted in mid-July 2020 to refocus reader attention on *Griffith Review* content and its extensive archive and to address reduced editorial capacity in terms of commissioning and co-ordination after the introduction of the occasional Through the Window piece. This reformat received positive feedback from readers, and sign-up rates continued to build through the second half of the year. Late in 2020, Griffith Review's busy cycle of newsletters and EDMs was evaluated and streamlined to distinguish communication for potential writers and readers rather than combining the two. This recognises the role of social media in terms of communicating discrete messages with discrete audiences, particularly around the announcement of writing opportunities. This approach will be further explored and refined during 2021 to introduce more marketing-focused stepwise revelations of new editions, their covers and their contents using different social media tools.

[Share](#)
[Tweet](#)
[Forward](#)
[Share](#)

[Read Later](#)

The latest from *Griffith Review*




**A dream that cannot be denied**  
*[online exclusive]*  
I cannot forget how my grandparents' generation had to fight, and fight hard, for the right to vote – to influence Australia's democracy. But how effective can our efforts be without a Voice to Parliament?


Vincent Lingiarri's fight for Indigenous rights is immortalised in the Kev Carmody and Paul Kelly song 'From little things, big things grow' – but what came next? Thomas Mayor lays bare the great flaw in Australian democracy.

Unlocked until **26 October**

Selected essays | *from the archive*  
To celebrate the release of NewSouth's powerful new literary anthology *Living with the Anthropocene* (scroll down for your chance to win a copy!), we've unlocked selected essays from our archive by three of the book's many excellent contributors. Read **Cameron Muir's reportage piece** on the plight of seabirds on Lord Howe Island; **Tony Birch's memoir** on narratives of country; and **Sophie Cunningham's essay** on the disaster of Cyclone Tracy, all unlocked until Monday 26 October.




What we've been reading at *Griffith Review*




**China after Covid** | *London Review of Books*  
"The 'keyboard warriors' active on various social media platforms and forums argue that, since our government takes care of almost everything, there's no reason to bother with a democratic electoral system that could produce Trump or Brexit."  
Wang Xuying describes post-COVID China, from a surging economy buoyed by 'revenge consumption' to the differing political narratives that characterise the country's shifting relationship with the US.

**Arnold Schwarzenegger's *Commando* was the most '80s action movie of the '80s** | *Esquire*  
'Commando has to get your vote as the most self-aware and homoerotic kill-fest of the Reagan era – an era, by the way, that had no shortage of such things.'  
We could all do with some escapism right now, and what better means of escape than the majestically B-grade 1985 Arnold Schwarzenegger vehicle *Commando*? Chris Nashawaty breaks down 'the most overlooked of Arnold's red-meat spectacles'.



**Book giveaway!**



Thanks to our friends at NewSouth Books, we've got three copies of *Living with the Anthropocene: Love, Loss and Hope in the Face of Environmental Crisis*, edited by Cameron Muir, Kirsten Wehner and Jenny Newell, to give away!

This powerful anthology features some of Australia's best writers and thinkers – including Jane Rawson, David Ritter, Ellen van Kesteren, Billy Griffiths and Jo Chandler – on living in a time of ecological crisis.

For your chance to win, simply **email us** your name and address by 4 pm on Monday 26 October.



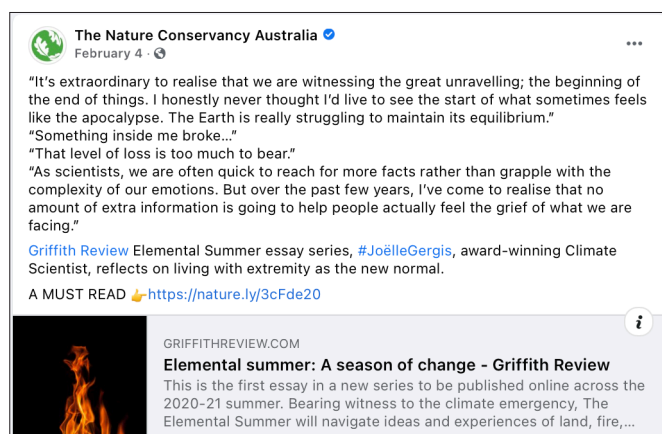
Potential engagement with broader reading audiences was the focus of the promotion of the fourth edition of 2020 – *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit* – with coverage in ArtsHub, *The Conversation*, and two key independent book catalogues, *Abbey's Sydney* and the Independent Booksellers' *Summer Reading Guide*. These last two have a combined print run in excess of 900,000 copies, distributed across Australia.

In terms of intra-university engagement, and in the wake of the Chancellery Review and the retirement of Professor Martin Betts, the reporting line for Griffith Review relocated from Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement) to Professor Scott Harrison, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Arts, Education and Law (AEL). This aligns Griffith Review more closely with the university's impressive suite of cultural assets, and Griffith Review is grateful to AEL for the great support, in terms of infrastructure, human relations and finance, they offered the journal during the complicated second half of 2020.

Engagement and close connection continues between Griffith Review and the Griffith University Engagement team (now Industry and External Engagement, headed by Dr Peter Binks, as vice-president, since late 2020). Griffith Review also acknowledges critical ongoing support from the Griffith University teams of Finance, Human Resources, Development and Alumni (later Advancement) and the Office of Marketing and Communications – all of which remained strong throughout a year of virtual meetings and connections. Griffith Review was particularly grateful for support and guidance from these facets of the university during the Roadmap to Sustainability process. Editions of *Griffith Review* were purchased as gifts by university groups including Griffith Agribusiness, the Policy Innovation Hub and the Griffith Asia Institute. Attendees at Griffith University's Senior Leadership Conference were presented with copies of *Griffith Review 65: Crimes and Punishments*, published in August 2019 in partnership with the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

'I subscribed to the [Great Reads] newsletter a few weeks ago and every time I open it, I click on one thing and it's always one wonderful thing...it's a great collection of writing.'

### Reader feedback after the redesign of GR's weekly Great Reads



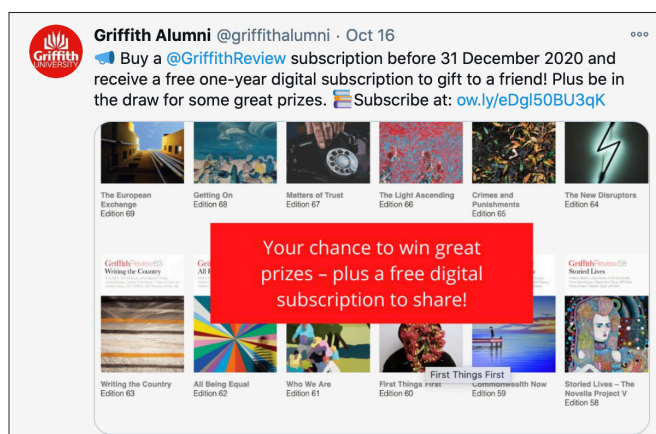
**The Nature Conservancy Australia** February 4 · 🌱

"It's extraordinary to realise that we are witnessing the great unravelling; the beginning of the end of things. I honestly never thought I'd live to see the start of what sometimes feels like the apocalypse. The Earth is really struggling to maintain its equilibrium."  
 "Something inside me broke..."  
 "That level of loss is too much to bear."  
 "As scientists, we are often quick to reach for more facts rather than grapple with the complexity of our emotions. But over the past few years, I've come to realise that no amount of extra information is going to help people actually feel the grief of what we are facing."

[Griffith Review](#) Elemental Summer essay series, [#JoëlleGergis](#), award-winning Climate Scientist, reflects on living with extremity as the new normal.

A MUST READ 📖 <https://nature.ly/3cFde20>

GRIFFITHREVIEW.COM  
**Elemental summer: A season of change - Griffith Review**  
 This is the first essay in a new series to be published online across the 2020-21 summer. Bearing witness to the climate emergency, The Elemental Summer will navigate ideas and experiences of land, fire,...



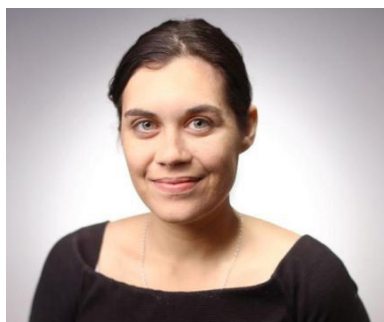
**Griffith Alumni** @griffithalumni · Oct 16

📖 Buy a [@GriffithReview](#) subscription before 31 December 2020 and receive a free one-year digital subscription to gift to a friend! Plus be in the draw for some great prizes. 🎁 Subscribe at: [ow.ly/eDgl50BU3gK](https://ow.ly/eDgl50BU3gK)

Your chance to win great prizes – plus a free digital subscription to share!

Griffith Review Editions 69-74 are featured in the collage, including: The European Exchange, Getting On, Matters of Trust, The Light Ascending, Crimes and Punishments, The New Disruptions, Writing the Country, All Being Equal, What We Are, First Things First, and Storied Lives.

# Spotlit writers



## *Amy McQuire*

Amy McQuire is a Darumbal and South Sea Islander woman and previous editor of two national Indigenous publications: *National Indigenous Times* and *Tracker*. She has written for outlets including *The Guardian*, *Meanjin*, *The Monthly*, *The New York Times* and *BuzzFeed Australia*.

Amy's powerful work of reportage, 'White justice, black suffering: extracting false confessions', was supported by an Arts Queensland 2019 Griffith Review Queensland Writing Fellowship. It won the 2020 Clarion Award for Indigenous Issues Reporting. The judges noted Amy's 'deep, personal connection to her story... Her research helps the reader discern clarity of an important topic with immense psychological complexity. The compelling story flows seamlessly, and cleverly explores case studies and professional opinion. If great journalism is to inform and educate, this piece ticks all the right boxes.'



## *Natasha Cica*

Dr Natasha Cica played a central role in Griffith Review throughout this year – not only through her tireless work as co-editor of and ambassador for *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange* in terms of managing relationships with writers, partners and other supporters and donors, but also as contributor to *Griffith Review 67: Matters of Trust*. Her short essay for this collection, 'Signing up to the social contract', was framed by the absence of an entry for 'trust' in Tiffany Watt Smith's cultural history *The Book of Human Emotions: An Encyclopedia from Anger to Wanderlust* (2015) and created a powerful touchpoint for the edition overall and the year that followed in its wake.

Natasha participated in events in Hobart and Adelaide in support of *Griffith Review 67*, and endured – during a long lockdown in Hobart – the disruption and abandonment of many plans around *Griffith Review 69*. Her passion, and her example, directly fed into the powerful media performance of this edition in a complicated quarter, and her generosity and nimbleness saw her pivot, as the term goes, to participate – from Hobart – in events hosted in Brisbane and Canberra in support of this edition before the return of in-person events in late 2020 and early 2021.



### *Mirandi Riwoe*

Mirandi Riwoe's novel *Stone Sky Gold Mountain* was published in 2020 by UQP – an extract of which, 'Gold Mountain Woman', appeared in *Griffith Review 61: Who We Are* (2018). *Stone Sky Gold Mountain* won the 2020 Fiction Book Award at the Queensland Literary Awards and the inaugural ARA Historical Novel Prize. Mirandi was one of three judges for the Novella Project VIII (winners published in *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*) along with Angela Meyer and Holden Sheppard.



### *Sarah Holland-Batt*

After providing extraordinary testimony at the public hearings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, QUT Associate Professor Sarah Holland-Batt was commissioned to contribute a foundational piece to *Griffith Review 68: Getting On*. The resulting essay, 'Magical thinking and the aged care crisis', generated strong media interest and support on social media platforms – the Federal Member for Moreton, the Hon. Graham Perrett, contacted *Griffith Review* to share the impact the piece had on him and distributed it throughout the Federal Labor Opposition leadership group. In a neat circle, Sarah's essay was quoted in the interim report of the Royal Commission that had, in part, inspired it. Building further on this work, she later told us: 'Happily I received news that some colleagues and I have been awarded an ARC Discovery grant to work on amplifying the voices of aged care residents over the next four years, which is exciting – great to be able to tackle the issue with the backing of proper funding.'



### *Thomas Mayor*

In 2017, Thomas Mayor participated in the conferences and consultations that led to the Uluru Statement from the Heart – he is a signatory to its declaration.

In 2020, Thomas contributed two powerful pieces to *Griffith Review* that explored Uluru, the Wave Hill walk-off, and the processes and potentials of the time between. 'A dream that cannot be denied' was published online to mark the third anniversary of the federal government's rejection of the Uluru Statement. 'When the heart speaks' was published in *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*. A Torres Strait Islander who works as an organiser with the Maritime Union of Australia, Mayor has a powerful voice as a leader in this space that was reflected in the strong interest these two pieces received in the media and through social media platforms.



### *Andrew Stafford*

Andrew Stafford's extraordinary essay 'Dying wish' is the first piece funded by a reportage partnership between Griffith Review and the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund. This project provides writers with the resources to consult and interview a wide range of experts in a given field alongside the creative space to explore a topic close to their hearts.

Andrew's piece is, in many ways, the perfect example of this. At a personal level, he has, for many years, navigated the medical and ethical complexities of caring for someone with reduced capacity, as his mother has dealt with early-onset Alzheimer's. At a journalistic level, he has followed the debate around voluntary assisted dying (VAD) – and is at the peak of his considerable skills in both the reporting and crafting of a wide-ranging and complex narrative. This story brings these two strands of Andrew's life and work together. His careful and exquisite survey of more than thirty people tasked with thinking through VAD from areas including law, medicine, ethics, advocacy and religion, as well as those personally impacted by these decisions, maps the nuances of this topic in a deeply personal yet clear-eyed way.



### *Teela Reid*

In 2019, Griffith Review Editor Ashley Hay began working with Wiradjuri and Wailwan woman, lawyer and activist Teela Reid on her first longform piece of writing for the print edition of *Matters of Trust*. There can be great trust and great generosity involved in the exchange between a writer and an editor, and the exchange around this piece was one of such richness. In the end, Teela's powerful essay, '2020: A year of reckoning, not reconciliation', became the lead online exclusive published in support of *Matters of Trust*, just ahead of 26 January 2020. It marked the debut of a powerful and exciting new First Nations voice.

Teela subsequently won the 2020 Daisy Utemmorah Award to publish *Our Matriarchs Matter*, her first junior fiction novel, with Magabala Books, expanded her Blackfulla Bookclub collaboration with Merinda Dutton, and produced a second powerful long-form essay, 'The heart of seeding First Nations sovereignty', published in the run-up to the anniversary of the rejection of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and 2020's postponed NAIDOC week. This work also generated significant media and social media interest, and Griffith Review is excited to have played a role in bringing Teela's voice to readers everywhere.



# Staff

The role of associate publisher was the only role to undergo transition during 2020. Alexandra Payne stepped into a part-time (0.6FTE) allocation for this role in late 2019, ahead of the announcement of the Australia Council's new round of four-year funding in early 2020. The idea was that this role would be reframed and advertised in light of that announcement. While Griffith Review was successful in the funding round, the university's hiring freeze meant the planned restructure couldn't take place. Alex continued in the role until August 2020 (increased to 0.8FTE in acknowledgement of the range of duties involved in the longer term and the significant workload involved in changing distributors) before returning to her busy freelance editorial practice. In the midst of the freeze, Jane O'Hara was able to take up the balance of Alex's contract, coming in as associate publisher at 0.8FTE from August. Jane was most recently the Lead, Strategic Engagement at State Library of Queensland, and before that worked across a suite of cultural institutions, including Arts Queensland and Brisbane Powerhouse. Jane's contract was given the maximum extension – to August 2021 – early in the new year, and the position will now be restructured and advertised according to the original plan.

<b>Publisher</b>	Professor Julianne Schultz [advisory/consultative]
<b>Editor</b>	Associate Professor Ashley Hay [0.9FTE]
<b>Associate Publisher</b>	Alexandra Payne [0.6FTE to June 2020/0.8FTE to August 2020] Jane O'Hara [0.8FTE from August 2020]
<b>Managing Editor</b>	John Tague [1.0FTE]
<b>Senior Editor</b>	Dr Carody Culver [1.0FTE Feb–Oct 2020; 0.8FTE from Oct 2020]
<b>Editorial Assistant</b>	Lauren Mitchell [0.8FTE to Feb 2020]
<b>Marketing and Events Co-ordinator</b>	Emma Reason [casual Feb–May 2020; August 2020–Jan 2021; 1.0FTE from Feb 2021] Jessie Elvin [0.6FTE internal secondment from Griffith University GUMURRII]
<b>Business Support Co-ordinator</b>	Esha Buch [1.0FTE]

## Staff Development

While plans for significant staff development around the transfer of distribution to NewSouth books mid-year had to be postponed, the senior editor, former editorial assistant and business support co-ordinator all undertook InDesign training during this year. In late 2020, Senior Editor Carody Culver also undertook her first commission, from rising crime writer Kyle Perry, for *Griffith Review* 72: *States of Mind*, with the resulting work making a powerful and effective addition to Griffith Review's 2021 suite of publications.

## Internship program

Griffith Review's regular offering of editorial and marketing internships to high-achieving students from Griffith University and the University of Queensland was suspended during most of 2020 due to Covid restrictions. In early 2020, Griffith Review welcomed Humaira Saeed, a writing, editing and publishing postgraduate student from the University of Queensland, for an eight-week internship. The internship/work-integrated-learning options offered by Griffith Review will be refreshed and renovated for students throughout 2021.



# COVID-19: Adaptations and opportunities

In early February 2020, Griffith University held its Senior Leadership Conference, which Griffith Review was delighted to attend at the invitation of then-Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement) Professor Martin Betts. As the last session of this two-day retreat, Griffith's Professor Nigel McMillan gave an overview of the novel coronavirus impacting life in China – many international students were already exploring their options around travel to Australia for the beginning of the new year.

In many ways, that briefing put us on a useful footing – it was advance warning, a shot across the bow of the situation that might unfold. It made it possible to feel slightly ahead of an unpredictably unfolding game. By 11 March, the spread of COVID-19 had been declared a pandemic; by the end of that week, Griffith Review, along with most elements of Griffith University and broader Australia, was working from home.

The biggest impact for Griffith Review in this space was a staff vacancy – Lauren Mitchell, who worked as Griffith Review's tireless editorial assistant for several years, accepted a publishing job in Melbourne in early February, leaving later that month. Her job, recast as Marketing and Events Co-ordinator, was advertised, and an exceptional shortlist of candidates was assembled. Twenty-four hours before their interviews were to be held, a hiring freeze came into place – but thanks to a prompt response by Griffith University Human Resources, Finance and Office of Marketing and Communications, Griffith Review was able to continue the contract of the casual cover, Emma Reason, who stayed in place until the end of April. An internal secondment – Jessie Elvin, from Griffith University's Gumurrii unit – stepped in at that point and provided invaluable assistance through the second publication of the year for the highly successful *Getting On* edition. We're grateful to Jessie for stepping up to this challenge and for all her work, and also to Emma Reason for returning as a casual when that was possible, in late July. We're also delighted that Emma was able to apply for and secure the position – as a full-time ongoing position under the new M&C structure – in early 2021. This puts Griffith Review in an exceptionally strong space in terms of the professional capacities and skills Emma brings to the job as well as the knowledge and insights she has already garnered over twelve months with the team.

The hiring freeze also impacted the managing editor, associate publisher and business support co-ordinator – all staff employed on fixed-term contracts that would have expired during 2020. With support from the highest levels of Griffith Review People Services, Marketing and Communications and the Griffith Review Advisory Board, a successful case was made to the university's Resource and Hiring Approval Group to extend these three positions:

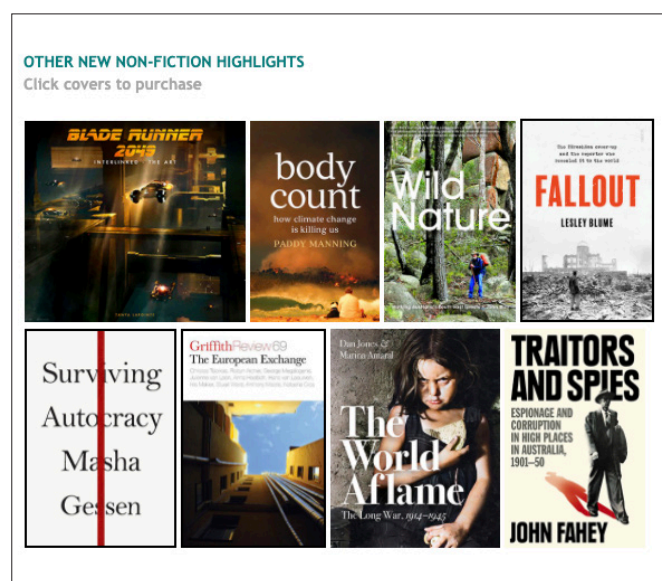
Position	Salary Scale	Start Date	End Date	Proposed extension date
00054668 – Managing Editor	H07.3	2014-12-01	2020-05-25	2022-05-15
00051596 – Associate Publisher	H09.1	2019-12-03	2020-07-24	2021-02-26
00052714 – Business Support Co-ordinator*	H06.1	2019-08-19	2020-09-07	2022-08-20

This resulted in two-year extensions for the managing editor and business support co-ordinator and a seven-month extension to February 2021 for the associate publisher.

Our great gratitude goes to our publishing partners and funders, who allowed us to be malleable and responsive to the many changes of the year – particularly around event opportunities and schedules. Thanks to the Australia Council for their support through so many transitions, and particular thanks to the Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund and McLean Foundation for allowing us to reshape planned editorial projects in light of Covid restrictions.

The problems with our website, especially in terms of subscriptions, sales and renewals, but also in terms of access to editorial content and the beginnings of our creation of reading spirals, were myriad. This became more critical during the pandemic, as the website was our primary interface with audiences while their interactions with bookshops were hampered. Addressing these issues and shortcomings is a critical focus for 2021 and the ongoing success and growth of Griffith Review.

While the pandemic impacted various facets of forward-planning and created unexpected shortfalls and bottlenecks in capacity at different times, it is important to underscore the opportunities Griffith Review was able to seize – and create – for its writers and readers and for the shape of its own business strategies and partnerships throughout the year. The dedication and resilience of its small team, their willingness to adapt and to go the extra mile, and the support of Australia's reading public – reflected in a sector-wide uptick in book sales and subscriptions across the year – were all cause for celebration. Given the broader global context, and the impacts of COVID-19 on the cultural and tertiary sectors in particular, it is a strange but important thing to say that 2020 stands as a highly successful year for Griffith Review in so many ways.



# Finance and distribution

In 2020, Griffith Review's audited book and subscription sales totalled \$93,771. This represents an increase of 7.7 per cent on the 2019 audited sales figures. Additional income from foundations, fundraising and entry fees supplemented book and subscription sales, bringing the total earned income (not including grants or in-kind sponsorships) to \$213,167.

Griffith Review's annual donations campaign exceeded target, outperforming previous years. Dr Cathryn Mittelhauser again made a significant donation, demonstrating her ongoing commitment to Griffith Review's vision and maintaining her and her sister Dr Margaret Mittelhauser's support of the publication since its inception in 2013.

Griffith Review's position within the university, including governance, oversight and budget reporting, transitioned from Industry and External Engagement to Arts, Education and Law. In conjunction with the Griffith University finance teams, Griffith Review's budget forward projections for 2020 were twice reviewed in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pleasingly, 2020 saw an uptick in subscriptions and subsequent financial return to Griffith Review. Forward cashflow projection budgeting for 2021 is cautious, as the expectation of a return to steadier rates of subscription uptake is expected in 2021 and beyond.

Griffith Review was highly successful in project funding and philanthropic support applications, achieving an overall total, from mid-2019 (the beginning of the operating budget for 2020), of more than \$180,000, supporting projects and editions from 2020 through 2021. Griffith Review also successfully explored the implementation of an innovative funding model whereby partnerships provide cross-edition funding as well as single-edition support, as evidenced by funding secured for *Unsettling the Status Quo*, generating four new works to be published in 2021.

Distribution contracting for Griffith Review transitioned from Text Publishing (UBD) to NewSouth Publishing (ADS). Griffith Review's retail buy-in remained commensurate with previous quarters as sales fluctuated throughout the year thanks to the impacts of the global pandemic, achieving an uptick overall. Retail buy-in increased by more than 100 per cent for copies of the year's fourth book (*Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*). The partnership with ADS provides access to a real-time dashboard and allows for constant monitoring of sales and statistics.

The transition of distribution contracts enabled a timely review of Griffith Review stock at both a warehouse and in-house level. The organisation now has an accurate record and knowledge of the print editions that have sold out. As a result, Griffith Review has also been able to explore and undertake targeted reprints as well as publicly celebrate the editions that have sold out. The stocktake allowed the organisation to confidently undertake strategic pulping of excess stock by UBD and Griffith University contractors. Print runs and distribution approaches have also been refined to enable better management of stock.

Better internal processes continue to deliver streamlined communications and timely payments to contributors, leading to a more positive experience with the publication for many writers. Unfortunately, the exploration of e-contracts was stalled by the pandemic's disruption and still remains a longer term goal of the organisation. As part of the larger university system, Griffith Review also needs to revise some systems to ensure processes are in place to monitor and track the invoicing of incoming grants and project funding.

Ongoing and systemic issues with the interface between the sales platform and the Griffith Review website continue to present commercial challenges for the organisation. Planning is underway for a university-supported long-term solution that addresses the foundational causes of these issues and, it is hoped, will be resolved by early 2022. In addition, and linked to the interface issues, significant issues were also identified with the subscription management system. Resolution of these issues will be prioritised in coming months, with the goal to implement a new system that allows for simpler maintenance of these critical ongoing customer interactions. An auto-renew function was identified by the university through Ezi-Debit, already in use in several sections of Griffith. It is hoped that the implementation of Ezi-Debit, which enables auto-renewal and instalment payments, will be available as part of the new system.

Griffith University's Film and Business schools, Brisbane Writers Festival, Griffith Asia Institute and State Library of Queensland all purchased bulk orders of editions to be gifted at their respective initiatives.

Subscriptions more than doubled during 2020, driven partly by a sector-wide uptick in sales and subscriptions during the first months of COVID-19 lockdown. The subscription drive run in conjunction with *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange* offered all active subscribers the chance to win either bespoke jewellery (donated by Melanie Katsalidis) or one of four wine packs (donated by Handpicked Wines), with winners were drawn and notified on 4 November. These prizes were arranged by Dr Natasha Cica as part of her work supporting *Griffith Review 69: The European Exchange*, of which she was co-editor.

In late October 2020, Griffith Review implemented a buy-one-get-one-free (BOGOF) subscription offer, providing all new and renewing subscribers access to a complimentary digital subscription to gift to a friend or family member. Entrants to the Novella Project VIII were also offered a complimentary digital subscription, beginning with *Griffith Review 70: Generosities of Spirit*, which published the winners of that prize. The BOGOF offer remained open until 31 December 2020 and formed the basis of the Christmas subscription drive. The campaign was promoted to audiences across Griffith Review social media and newsletters/Great Reads and to current and lapsing subscribers. The campaign received support across the university and appeared in blogs, newsletters and on the social media accounts of the Griffith University Arts, Education and Law faculty, Griffith University Advancement (formerly Development and Alumni), Griffith Business School and Griffith University Library.

Of the 207 new and renewing subscribers in the period from October to 31 December 2020, thirty-six redeemed the offer – an uptake of 25 per cent. There is no end date to the uptake, so it is possible that some more of these codes will be activated going forward. Overall, the number of subscriptions purchased doubled from November/December 2019 figures (thirty-nine) during the corresponding period in 2020 (seventy-eight).

# Governance and operations

In 2020, the Griffith Review Advisory Committee entered its fourth year of governance and met in November. The Committee is now chaired by Professor Scott Harrison, Pro-Vice Chancellor (AEL), following the retirement of Professor Martin Betts.

Griffith Review extends its sincere gratitude to Jill Eddington for her contribution to the work of the Advisory Committee as she steps down from this role in 2021. Several vacancies now exist on the Advisory Committee and these positions will be filled during 2021. The aim of membership is to draw on the collective wisdom of senior university executives and publishing professionals. The current Advisory Committee includes:

<b>Professor Scott Harrison (Chair)</b>	Pro-Vice Chancellor (AEL), Griffith University
<b>Professor Susan Forde</b>	Director, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University
<b>Professor David Grant</b>	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Business), Griffith University
<b>Mr Phillip Stork</b>	Chief Marketing Officer, Office of Marketing and Communications, Griffith University
<b>Ms Maureen Sullivan</b>	University Librarian, Griffith University
<b>Professor Anne Tiernan</b>	Dean (Engagement), Griffith Business School (until March 2021)
<b>Ms Fiona Stager</b>	Owner and Manager, Avid Reader Bookshop
<b>Ms Melissa Lucashenko</b>	Author and <i>Griffith Review</i> Contributor

Griffith Review continues to produce a comprehensive quarterly report featuring activity summaries and relevant data and statistics pertinent not only to the edition published in that quarter but also to other events, activities, media, operational and governance activity that take place within that timeframe.

2020 was the last reporting window for the Australia Council 2017–20 four-year funding agreement and the Novella Project VI–VIII funding agreement (2018–20).

Annual performance reviews at Griffith Review were suspended during the R2S process but will be reinstituted in line with university timeframes.

Closer alignment between Griffith Review and the university has led to greater design support provided by the Griffith Design Studio, allowing for a more professional and streamlined approach to the design and distribution of Griffith Review's external reporting, marketing and communications.

Griffith Review has also developed a standardised, yet flexible, tiered partnership prospectus that provides a clearer framework for government and corporate funders considering a relationship with the publication.



# Contributor highlights

*Griffith Review* contributors were shortlisted for, and celebrated wins in, awards across Australia and internationally, such as Tara June Winch for *The Yield* (Vintage) (including the Miles Franklin Literary Award, the Voss Literary Prize and the Prime Minister's Literary Award for Fiction), Mirandi Riwoe for *Stone Sky Gold Mountain* (UQP) (including the inaugural ARA Prize and the Queensland Literary Award for Fiction) and Ellen van Neerven for *Throat* (UQP, 2020) (awarded the inaugural Quentin Bryce Award). Shaun Tan was awarded the highly regarded Kate Greenaway Medal for *Tales from the Inner City* (Allen & Unwin), the first extract from which was published in *Griffith Review 47: Looking West*. Maria Tumarkin was awarded the prestigious Windham-Campbell Prize for Nonfiction.

Sophie Overett won the 2020 Penguin Literary Prize. Andrew Roff won the 2020 Peter Carey Short Story Award. Owen Marshall (*Pearly Gates*, Vintage) and Ashleigh Young (*How I Get Ready*, Victoria University Press) were shortlisted for the 2020 Ockham New Zealand Book Awards. Jane Rawson's *From the Wreck* (Transit Lounge) was shortlisted for the UK's Kitschies awards, presented to 'progressive, intelligent and entertaining literature with a speculative element'. Grace Lucas-Pennington won the 2020 Nakata Brophy Short Fiction and Poetry Prize for 'Superposition'. Gregory Day won the 2020 Patrick White Literary Award. Rebecca Gigs won the Waverley Council's 2020 Mark and Evette Moran Nib Literary Award for *Fathoms* (Scribe).

More than fifty *Griffith Review* contributors had books published throughout 2020, including Patrick Allington, Katrina Bryant, Trent Dalton, Laura Elvery, Fiona Foley, Sophie Hardcastle, Ashley Kalagian Blunt, Ronnie Scott, Gabbie Stroud, Merle Thornton, Madeleine Watts and Arnold Zable – and many of these publications had their roots in work created for or first published by *Griffith Review*.

*Griffith Review* contributors including Jo Chandler, Lesley Hughes, Rebecca Giggs, Bianca Nogrady and Peter Meredith had work selected for *Best Australian Science Writing's* tenth anniversary edition. Fiona Foley's essay for *Griffith Review 65: Crimes and Punishments*, 'All men choose the path they walk: Art and the scales of justice', was awarded the 2020 Arts Writing and Publishing Award for Best Art Writing by an Indigenous Australian.

In the Western Australian Premier's Book Awards, Holden Sheppard's *Invisible Boys* (Fremantle Press) was awarded the Western Australian Premier's Prize for an Emerging Writer, while Teela Reid won the 2020 Daisy Utemorrhah Award for Unpublished Indigenous Junior and YA Fiction.

Dr Christian Thompson was a finalist for the Arts Award in the 2020 Advance Awards. Annie Zaidi's *Prelude to a Riot* (Aleph Book Company) was shortlisted for the 2020 JCB Book Awards. Omar Sakr (*The Lost Arabs*, UQP) and Miriam Sved (*A Universe of Sufficient Size*, Picador) were shortlisted for the 2020 Colin Roderick Award. *The Altar Boys* by Suzanne Smith was shortlisted for Walkley Book of the Year. Kieran Finnane's *Peace Crimes* drew on work published in *Griffith Review 64: The New Disruptors*, and Gideon Haigh expanded his powerful reportage for *Griffith Review 65: Crimes and Punishments*, 'This is how I will strange you', into a book of the same name. Charlotte Wood's essay for *Griffith Review 68: Getting On*, 'Experiments in the art of living', explored some of the thinking that fed her highly successful 2020 novel, *The Weekend* (Allen & Unwin), later shortlisted for the 2021 NSWPLA Christina Stead Prize for Fiction. Cassandra Pybus' *Truganini* (Allen & Unwin) expanded her prize-winning novella 'Journey through the apocalypse' from *Griffith Review 58: Storied Lives*, while Rowena Lennox's *Dingo Bold* (Sydney University Press) grew from 'Killing bold', published in *Griffith Review 57: Perils of Populism*.

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