

## NEWS & EVENTS > Sydney Writers' Festival

FROM - TO  
20 MAY 2013 - 26 MAY 2013

# Sydney Writers' Festival



Stories lie at the heart of our lives. We need them to understand ourselves, to understand others, to make sense of the world around us. This year, Sydney Writers' Festival looks at the depth and breadth of storytelling and celebrates the simple pleasure of being told a great tale.

*'After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world' — Philip Pullman*

'To begin at the beginning', as Dylan Thomas said, is to consider our oral storytelling traditions. In this year's Festival Opening Address, Daniel Morden, one of Europe's greatest oral storytellers, reinvigorates this ancient tradition by sharing with us some of the stories he's collected from around the world and across the ages. Irish poet, novelist and bird-watcher Dermot Healy, whose work has been lavishly praised by Seamus Heaney, among others, visits us from the wilds of Sligo. Also in Australia for the first time, we have *The New Yorker's* literary critic, James Wood, as well as Norway's most notorious and controversial author, Karl Ove Knausgaard. Faramerz Dabhoiwala, "the Stephen Hawking of sex", spices up an event or two, and renowned physicist and cosmologist, Lawrence Krauss, shows us that not only is it possible that our universe arose

naturally from nothing, without supernatural shenanigans, but also that it probably did. We welcome one of India's most loved writers, Anita Desai, whose work spans decades, continents and emotional landscapes; Kate Atkinson, whose new book is "a box of delights"; Carlos Ruiz Zafón, author of *The Shadow of the Wind*; and Claire Messud with *The Woman Upstairs*, a brilliant 'acid bath' of a novel. Claire, a Canadian-French-American hybrid, who grew up partly in Australia, will deliver the Festival's Closing Address on the importance of "imaginary homelands". Showcasing the extraordinary range and scope of Australian writing, the Festival celebrates our unique storytellers. Gillian Mears speaks about her award-winning novel, *Foal's Bread*, for the first time in Sydney. Major General John Cantwell shares his profoundly moving story of living with post-traumatic stress, and Amanda Lohry asks former leader of the Greens, Bob Brown, about the future of activism. Hannah Kent, whose debut novel, *Burial Rites*, caused a bidding war around the world, describes her love letter to Iceland and the true story behind it.

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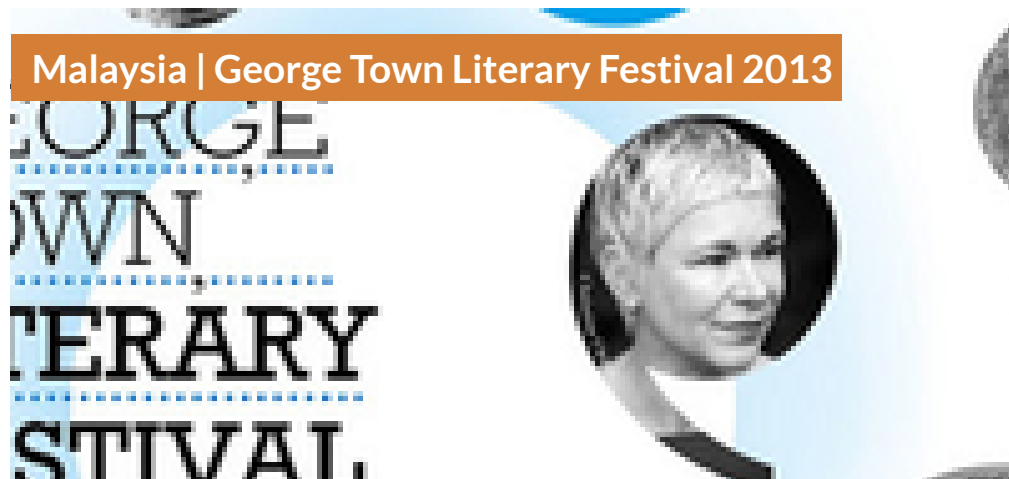
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