

Join top authors in Sydney on the path to Biennial Discovery

2012 promises to be a blockbuster year for the library and information sector with milestone events happening across the calendar. In planning the ALIA Biennial Sydney 2012 the convenors are developing a program which will match the conference theme of Discovery. This is also the National Year of Reading 2012 theme for July – the month in which the Biennial will be held, which is a nice segue into the link between the Biennial and the National Year of Reading.

To celebrate the National Year of Reading 2012 there will be lots of reading-focused program inclusions at the conference and the jewel in the crown will be a panel of writers featuring some top names dedicated to both writing and reading. So if you're coming to Sydney now's the time to grab works by these writers and start reading!

Matthew Reilly is the international bestselling author of action/thriller novels. His latest is *Scarecrow and the Army of Thieves*. Published in over 20 countries and known for their highly visual style, fast pace, and large-scale action scenes, over 3.5 million copies of his books have been sold around the world, more than a million copies apiece between Australia, the UK, and the USA.

Matthew's novels have also – unexpectedly – become a major tool in the fight to get teenagers into reading. While written for a mature readership, Matthew's novels have become very popular with reluctant male readers. This may stem from Matthew's own childhood experience – he cites his dislike for set reading projects in high-school as his main inspiration to "do it better".

The continued success of his novels has been attributed to not only the accessible, 'storyteller' style of writing, but also the highly charged and kinetic action sequences that take place throughout his works, deliberately making use of his unlimited budget of imagination to create scenes he calls "too big for Hollywood".

Dr Anita Heiss is the author of non-fiction, historical fiction, commercial women's fiction, poetry, social commentary, and travel articles. Currently she's working on her next book, *Am I Black Enough for You*, a memoir on identity. Anita is a regular guest at writers' festivals and travels internationally performing her work and lecturing on Indigenous literature. Anita is an Indigenous Literacy Day Ambassador and a proud member of the Wiradjuri nation of central New South Wales. She is also a National Ambassador for the National Year of Reading.

Former police detective turned novelist and librarian, **Pam Newton**, doesn't rank criminals as interesting people. "They are not nice people – they are not interesting people," she says emphatically. Newtown has no desire to glamorise criminals and describes her novel *The Old School* as "a completely different animal" to other books in the crime genre, set in 1992 against a background of buried secrets, police corruption, and the Vietnam War.

Melina Marchetta's first novel *Looking for Alibrandi* was published in 1992 and was released as a film in 2000, the script for which she also wrote. After that success, Melina worked as a secondary school teacher while producing her second novel, *Saving Francesca*, followed by *On the Jellicoe Road*. In 2006 she left teaching to become a full-time writer. Her first fantasy novel, *Finnikin of the Rock* was published in 2008 and in 2010 *The Piper's Son*, a companion novel to *Saving Francesca* was released. She has also written a children's book, *The Gorgon in the Gully*, as part of the Puffin Pocket Money series. Her novels have been published in 17 languages.

National Year of Reading NSW Ambassador, **Richard Glover** is the author of twelve books, including his latest, *Why Men Are Necessary* – a collection of comic pieces as featured on ABC Radio's *Thank God It's Friday* which he presents on ABC Sydney 702. His weekly column has been published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* for over 20 years.

A reminder that Early Bird registration closes on Wednesday 28 March so act on those New Year's resolutions to be organised and save money and register now.

It's going to be a conference you won't want to miss. Visit conferences.alia.org.au/alia2012/index.html for all the details.

Jan Richards
ALIA Biennial 2012 Committee
j.richards@orange.nsw.gov.au

What's your new year's career resolution?

The ALIA Career Development Kit is a tool that can help you achieve the next level in your career, no matter what stage you're at. It's all right here, ready to go at www.alia.org.au/education/pd/career.kit.html

The ALIA Career Development Kit is free to all ALIA personal and institutional members. It's a downloadable workbook full of information, strategies and exercises – and a skills audit. You can complete the Kit independently, but we recommend you seek a partner or mentor for maximum benefit.

The ALIA Career Development Kit helps you develop achievable, practical steps that will lead you toward your career goals. ALIA PD Scheme members get two points per hour (maximum 20 points per year, once only) when you complete the Kit – a great way to kick-start your continuing professional development for 2012.

To find out more, contact Judy Brooker, PD and Careers manager, 02 6215 8216, pd@alia.org.au or your ALIA State or Territory Manager.

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