

GATEWAYS FESTIVALS

MEET OUR PRESENTERS

Anna Jahjah has a master's degree in British and American Literature and Civilisation and a Bachelor in Arabic Literature and Civilisation from Aix-en-Provence University, in France. She has been teaching storytelling and creative writing techniques to French and Australian children for over ten years. She also owns her own theatre company which gives a voice to characters and stories that are rarely heard in Australia. Her creativity and her eye for the interesting contribute to her lively and stimulating workshops.

Diana Thanos is an experienced, highly effective, innovative primary school teacher with a Graduate Certificate in Gifted Education from UNSW. Her fast-paced, fun and engaging approach has led her to the G.A.T.E.WAYS team, where she focuses on teaching like-minded individuals in an exciting, hands on environment. Diana is passionate about creativity and has a love of learning that is both contagious and inspiring!

Erin Mansell is an experienced primary school teacher who has completed a Master of Education specialising in Gifted Education at the University of New South Wales. In addition to working as an educational presenter for G.A.T.E.WAYS, she has also worked as an online academic teacher, facilitating the learning of over 100 undergraduate education students. Erin is a dedicated educator who is very passionate about providing extension opportunities to gifted students.

Jacqx Melilli is a playwright, editor and drama teacher. She has a Master of Arts degree in Writing and Literature and is the author of the *Lights, Camera, Action* series of educational books on filmmaking and theatre production and multiple award-winning one-act plays performed at Eisteddfods and Theatre Festivals. Jacqx has worked in film, television and theatre and has conducted workshops at the Gold Coast Writer's Festival Authors in Schools program and Creative Writing for Young Geniuses.

Justine Daverio is a primary and secondary teacher who is passionate about learning. After gaining degrees in fine arts and teaching, she is now studying law in the Juris Doctor program at UNSW. Combining the creative skills she hones as an artist, with her extensive subject knowledge, teaching experience, and whacky sense of humour, Justine loves devising programs to get children thinking long after a session has ended.

Kate Parker is a writer specialising in science communications and has a passion for science advocacy and critical thinking. She is an accredited ethics teacher, and always encourages curiosity and thought-provoking discussion in her workshops. Kate is experienced in the field of gifted education and is excited to have the opportunity to explore the wonders of science with G.A.T.E.WAYS.

Laura Jade Hindes is an artist with a background in biology. Her work fuses the multidisciplinary fields of art, biology, lighting, neuroscience and BCI (brain-computer interface) technology to explore new ways of perceiving and interacting with our inner biological processes. She loves creating interactive experiences and educational workshops for events, festivals, schools and museums that revolve around creative science communication and experiential education.

Leslie Marsh has worn many hats in his career: he has been a film editor, a cinematographer, a drummer, and now an economist. He has a passion for maths and statistics and for the last few years has been teaching economics and econometrics (the statistics economists use) at the University of Sydney. When not teaching, Leslie can be found researching machine learning techniques, and turning maths into body percussion with the dance group Junkyard Beats.



Michelle Emsley has a passion for teaching mathematics and science and has taught primary students for over eight years. She has continued to study mathematics as a professional development pathway, and she loves putting what she has learnt to good use by inspiring the mathematicians, scientists and problem-solvers of the future. Michelle is excited to be presenting for G.A.T.EWAYS at this year's festival.

Sam McNair is a caricaturist, illustrator, teacher and apiarist. On weekends he works at events drawing caricatures on the spot, and during the week as an educator and mentor for young artists. Sam is currently working on a picture book appropriating works by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. He relishes the opportunity to guide young artists and mathematicians in a student-centered fashion to unleash their imagination and creativity upon the world.

Sappho Dalziell is an experienced teacher with a Master of Fine Arts at COFA (UNSW) and is completing her Certificate of Gifted Education this year. She has studied both Art History and Philosophy. Sappho has a wealth of experience in implementing an interdisciplinary approach to teaching Literacy.

Tracy Forbes is a passionate educator and experienced G.A.T.EWAYS presenter who thoroughly enjoys creating and presenting programs for the enthusiastic children who attend gifted and talented programs. Equipped with her mini Certificate of Gifted Education from UNSW, she has a passion for catering for gifted learners. Tracy is looking forward to lots of mind-stretching and mind-boggling activities during the Sydney Festivals of Workshops.

Vanessa Ryan-Rendall has over ten years' teaching experience in the primary classroom and has completed her Master of Gifted Education. She has a passion for learning about the world around her and she loves to spend time exploring the outdoors, reading adventure books, linking numeracy to gardening and thinking about new ideas. Her workshops are as imaginative as they are thought-provoking and challenging!

Zuzi Fort studied at the University of Western Sydney – Nepean (Theatre) and at the University of Technology – Sydney (Communication – directing and scriptwriting). She has worked as an actor, director, scriptwriter, drama coach, radio/TV host as well as a stunt performer. Highlights include performing Moliere at the Belvoir, acting with David Ritchie in Place with the Pigs, playing Tiger Lily at Capitol Theatre, performing stunts on the Superman movie and working for the Universal Studios. For over ten years, Zuzi has worked with children and young adults encouraging their creativity, developing confidence and essential life skills.