

# GATEWAYS FESTIVALS

## MEET OUR PRESENTERS

**Anna Jahjah** has a master's degree in British and American Literature and Civilisation and a Bachelor of Arabic Literature and Civilisation from Aix-en-Provence University, in France. She has taught storytelling and creative writing techniques to French children for over eight years but one day realised that her heart belonged to Sydney! Twenty thousand kilometres and twenty-four hours later she found herself presenting writing and drama workshops to Australian children and has never looked back.

**Anna Kamaralli** is a director, dramaturg, drama educator, theatre critic and academic specialist in the performance and teaching of Shakespeare. Her book *Shakespeare and the Shrew* is published by Palgrave Macmillan and her edition of *Much Ado About Nothing* is part of the Arden Shakespeare Performance Editions series.

**Anu Vijayan** is a PhD candidate at Macquarie University where she is researching ways to conserve biodiversity through climate modelling and remote sensing. She has worked as an assistant researcher in ecology at Macquarie University and Taronga Zoo. She is passionate about all things with fur, feather and chlorophyll. Anu worked as a VFX artist for a decade with various studios around the world before changing career to follow her dream of saving the world. Anu aims to make science fun and exciting to young minds while encouraging them to be problem solvers and world changers!

**Dimitri Douchin** has travelled from France, where he studied physics, to Australia where he graduated with a PhD in Astronomy and Astrophysics. He shared his passion for the wonders of space and the Universe as an educator at Sydney Observatory. Dimitri now devotes his time in researching and teaching children and adults how humans can live harmoniously on our Earth... and on other planets in space too!

**Emily Taylor** is an actor with over fifteen years' experience who has appeared in a number of television programs including *Get Crack!n*, *Home and Away*, *The Dr Blake Mysteries*, *It's A Date* and *Underbelly*. She has worked extensively in comedy, sketch and improvisation with troupes such as *Spontaneous Broadway*, *Random Musical*, *Impro Melbourne* and *Melbourne Playback*. Emily has worked as a writer, director and facilitator across Australia and New Zealand and is a regular teaching artist with Melbourne Theatre Company, Malthouse Theatre, Drama Victoria and Arena Theatre Company.

**Emma Rose Smith** is a writer, educator, and arts organiser living on Gadigal-Wangal land. She directs Unspoken Words Storytelling (festival and artist co-operative), co-organises Word in Hand (poetry and performance night) and manages the Poetry Object competition for young people at Red Room Poetry. Her writing is published in various print publications and has been featured at the National Library of Australia, the National Young Writers' Festival, the Emerging Writers' Festival, Noted Writers' Festival, Wollongong Writers' Festival, Little Fictions, Subbed In, Enough Said Poetry Slam and various other spaces.

**Jen Watkins** completed a Bachelor of Science majoring in Neuroscience at UNSW. She has since gone on to complete a Master of Early Childhood and Primary teaching at WSU and she has also published a children's book. Her life purpose is to explore and appreciate our world, universe and selves. Jen believes that understanding our own minds is fascinating, and vital for academic success, social and emotional wellbeing AND for achieving our life's passions and goals.

**Jess Buchanan** is a technology educator and instructional designer with a passion for the Maker movement. She has spent the last fifteen years designing and teaching technology programs catering to all areas of the community including kids, teens, teachers, parents and seniors. She has worked as a technology integrator in numerous Sydney schools, and produced the 2016 and 2017 Maker Expos at Double Bay Library, a festival of technology and innovation. Since becoming a parent, she has become increasingly passionate about preparing our kids for a STEAM enhanced future. As an instructional designer and curriculum developer at Coder Academy she enjoys designing education programs reaching out to schools, parents and communities, helping to ensure all kids have access to the tools they need to be confident and creative with technology.

**Julian Ridden** is a passionate technologist and open educator who is convinced that education, digital learning and future thinking has the potential to transform the lives of teachers and students alike. His goal is to empower those around him with the tools, technology and mindsets that will prepare and enable them in the world of not just today but the emerging and ever-changing world of the future. He does this through his work at Coder Academy and also through delivering keynotes and workshops at conferences around the globe. His passions include MakerSpaces, AR/VR, Code development and pedagogies focused on design thinking and reflective practice. He is driven by the quote, "Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible" ~ Frank Zappa

**Kate Parker** is a writer, science communicator and perpetual learning enthusiast with a passion for great storytelling and interesting facts. A qualified ethical education facilitator and literature lover, Kate loves the opportunity to explore great ideas, ethical conundrums and critical thought processes, watching the mind cogs of children turn as they explore the unknown recesses of their unbound intellect.

**Katrina Sims** is an experienced teacher of specialised classes for gifted students. She has a master's degree in Gifted Education and has taught mathematics to students in Years 7 to 10, including enrichment programs for mathematically gifted students. Katrina is a member of the Australian Mathematics Trust Challenge Problem Solving committee, which produces the enrichment problems for students in Years 3 to 10, and she has presented workshops on gifted education and mathematics within Australia and overseas. Katrina has received a Bernard Neumann Award for contributions to Mathematics Enrichment for Australian Students. She has a passion for problem solving in mathematics and codes and ciphers.

**Lucinda Clutterbuck** is an artist and animator with a passion for learning and thinking. She has produced over thirty short animations and she has run workshops for all ages using animation and art techniques, as well as cross-curricular programs. She loves to work with like-minded individuals of all ages in the pursuit of knowledge. Lucinda thrives on helping children experience the flow of creative thinking, especially via problem solving.

**Marianne Schmidt** loves exploring the mysteries of ancient history and is fascinated by the symbolism encoded in ancient myths, art and languages. She is particularly interested in the crossover between science and myth. Holding degrees in science and management, and with a professional background in information technology, Marianne has the skills and experience to examine the past whilst keeping her gaze fixed firmly on the future. Her experience with gifted children has led her to appreciate the importance of challenging and extending gifted young minds as they pursue their learning passions.

**Michelle Emsley** worked as a reporter for a local newspaper and as a radio producer before studying primary teaching. She has taught primary school students for over nine years and has a passion for literacy. Michelle has a special interest in the mysteries of Ancient Rome as she spent her childhood wandering amongst Roman ruins in what is now St Albans, formerly Roman Verulamium. She thrives on tackling challenging problems and creating workshops that promote higher order thinking. Michelle is thrilled at the prospect of putting these passions to good use by inspiring the writers and mystery-solvers of the future. She developed a passion for working with gifted and talented students while in the mainstream classroom and is a frequent G.A.T.E.WAYS presenter.

**Rengen Parlane** has a Bachelor of Science (Advanced) and is currently studying the Doctor of Medicine at the University of Sydney. He is passionate about both disciplines and how they inform us about the world around us. Rengen has helped to educate young learners for the past four years, including as a Brainwaves Club leader, Eureka and Journeys presenter, and loves sharing the inspirational world of science with eager young minds.

**Sara Atem** is a general Biology graduate and she will complete her Master of Education this year. She has a 5-year-old daughter who inspires her daily. Sara is passionate about delivering workshops that are student lead and interactive. She prides herself on engaging learners through all five senses, because she knows that children never forget their hands-on experiences. Sara believes in challenging learners above their zone of proximal development and she loves doing this through the fascinating exploration of science.

**Sappho Dalziell** has a wealth of experience implementing an interdisciplinary approach to teaching across subject areas. She is an experienced teacher, has completed her mini Certificate of Gifted Education, has a Master of Fine Arts and is completing her masters' in Gifted Education. Sappho thoroughly enjoys designing exciting, interactive and stimulating learning experiences which ignite interest, spur creative and critical thinking, and encourage problem solving.

**Scott Hahn** was lying in a cul de sac on a Colorado winter night, observing the stars, when he had a revelation. "That's what I want to do! Go to the stars!". And the next day he changed his degree from electrical engineering to physics. Upon graduation, he had jobs lined up at Ball Aerospace (the people who made the Hubble telescope) and NASA (they need no introduction). Then he began travelling. "If all of this world is out there that I have hitherto had no idea about," he said to himself, "why ever would I leave? Earth first, Space later, I wager." (Scott uses very strange language when he talks to himself.) Racking up passport stamps that number into the mid-forties, he suddenly gave up his travelling lifestyle to be a Montessori teacher instead. And he never looked back. Now, finally, after ten years of teaching, Scott is earning his master's degree. In teaching, of course.

**Tracy Forbes** is an experienced and passionate teacher and G.A.T.E.WAYS presenter who enjoys creating and presenting fast-paced, fantastically fun and engaging sessions. Tracy has a broad range of interests including a love of Africa and adventures (she once took a year-long expedition through Southern Africa and came across many obstacles on her travels!). She also has a passion for the wonder of words and can't wait to dive into spin-doctoring at the Sydney Festival!

**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 the University of Technology – Sydney (Communication). Zuzi is an author, actor, director, scriptwriter, drama coach, radio/TV host and a stunt performer. For over ten years she has worked with children, encouraging their creativity and developing their confidence and ability to think creatively, critically and laterally.

# GATEWAYS

**25** years of  
inspiration  
and challenge

