2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Oh the cradle of life
Reaches the shore
Ah the cradle of life
Rocks me gently
But will the cradle of life
Rock no more

~ Archie Roach from 'The Cradle of Life' 2022 Poetry Month Ambassador

RED ROOM POETRY

I go down to the ocean

Here on the sand
Ah my heart is broken
As here I stand
Looking out over the sea
And the cradle of life
Gives me plenty
Oh the cradle of life
Reaches the shore
Oh the cradle of life
Rocks me gently
But will the cradle of life
Rock no more

Take a look at this country
Look what you've done
Well you board up the windows
Block out the sun
Then you go down to the sea
And the cradle of life
Gives me plenty
Oh the cradle of life
Reaches the shore
Ah the cradle of life
Rocks me gently
But will the cradle of life
Rock no more

Oh rock my soul, rock my soul
Oh rock my soul. rock my soul

There's no where to run to
No where to hide
And I cant' see the turtle;
There's blood on the tide
Spreading out over the sea
Ah the cradle of life
Gives me plenty
And the cradle of life
Reaches the shore
Oh the cradle of life
Rocks me gently
But will the cradle of life
Rock no more

Oh rock my soul, rock my soul
Oh rock my soul, rock my soul.

~ Archie Roach from 'The Cradle of Life'
2022 Poetry Month Ambassador

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Red Room Poetry acknowledges the Elders and Traditional Custodians of the lands, waters, skies and languages where we live, work, write and share poetry. We are grateful to collaborate with First Nations people and respect their continuing cultures as we move across Country.

FROM OUR PATRON



there is always hope
from hope blossoms succulents
which turns death to life,
nothing to something
as pigface spreads like a new dawn

~ Toby R. Year 5, from 'Hope' POEM FOREST 2022

Being Patron of Red Room Poetry is to hover above a seemingly endless cloud. You are surrounded by shifts of wind that blow words of varying intensity into artistic shapes of meaning.

Over several years I have seen the clouds shift, building momentum within a vortex of thinking minds. Poets have become engaged; children have become poets. It is what we need, and the Red Room has delivered. Tree-like, it has branched out to new lands and new people. Indeed trees have been planted, so that poems and poets themselves have grown through active participation.

A poem sometimes challenges the mind; a poet challenges him/herself. The poetry world is not obscure if we are prepared to look beyond the clouds and into nature-- where we live.

John B Fairfax AO

FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



I left the earth and the humid air
I left myself within myself
I left the orange upon the dresser,
the simmer upon the stove
and the spring to its own devices

~ Miranda G.G, Year 12, from 'Low Tide' POEM FOREST 2022

As Red Room Poetry gets set to celebrate its 20th year, we reflect on our origins and all those who have helped make this milestone — our poets, readers, audiences, generous funders, partners, our dedicated team, Board and Patron.

Since being founded by Johanna Featherstone in 2003, Red Room Poetry has grown in a myriad of ways. This growth is highlighted in our 2022 program where major national initiatives like Poetry Month and POEM FOREST provided more opportunities for poets than ever before. With thousands of poets creating and publishing new work, we ensure poetry is accessible, vibrant and meaningful for as many people as possible.

With events in every state and territory and young people helping to plant a forest with their poems, RR continues to create groundbreaking poetic possibilities. Alongside key initiatives are community-driven projects like MAD Poetry, Writing in Resistance and Fair Trade that give space to refugee, lived-experience and First Nations communities often marginalised by mainstream media and programming.

We're proud of our 2022 key achievements and excited to stand at the precipice of another 20 years of innovative programming.

All of this is made possible thanks to the stabilising support of Four Year Investment by the Australia Council for the Arts and Create NSW as well as the generosity of many individuals, Foundations and partners who make critical contributions to our poetic path. We're excited to continue creating with you in 2023 and beyond.

Dr Tamryn Bennett

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

> Let's say black holes
> are messengers, let's say the gap between
> ancestor and inheritor is the
> broken line forcing a poem to hang
> on the possibility of all things
>
> ~ Shastra Deo from 'Nothing Nowhere At Some Point', Fellowship Shortlist 2022



I am happy to report that Red Room Poetry continued to grow in strength during 2022 - through creative excellence, generous support and disciplined financial management. Red Room remains Australia's leading arts organisation for commissioning, creating, publishing and promoting poetry.

Our signature event, Poetry Month, launched in August 2021, has achieved remarkable success as an annual poetic celebration. It offers opportunities to hundreds of poets and audiences across the country, enhances our cultural fabric and has enjoyed the support and partnership of major institutions like NGA, MONA, the State Library of Queensland as well as City of Fremantle, Byron Writers Festival and more. With the assistance and promotion of our ambassadors - like the late Uncle Archie Roach, Bronte Campbell and Sisonke Msimang - Red Room's Poetry Month propels poetry in new ways and to new levels of public awareness.

Our visionary project, POEM FOREST, which has been so strongly supported from inception by our Patron John B. Fairfax AO, continues to be life-affirming for its many participants. In 2022, over 5,700 students and teachers penned and published a new work as part of the Poem Forest project. And for every poem, a tree was planted at the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, providing a permanent, living memento of each contributor's creativity.

Thanks to our generous supporters — our Patron, governments, foundations like Oranges & Sardines, and many far-sighted individuals including Bret Walker AO, SC and Tim Game SC — Red Room remains in a solid financial position as we enter our 20th anniversary year in 2023. However, ongoing support is essential in order to see our success, innovation and poetic possibilities continue to prosper. We hope you will join us in this poetic endeavour.

Hon. MA Pembroke
Chairman

OUR STORY

so too the moon
who sees all those standing
on the edge of journey

~ Jazz Money from 'so too the sunrise' commissioned for Poetry Month

VISION

Red Room Poetry's vision is to make poetry in meaningful ways.

IMPACT

RR is Australia's leading organisation for commissioning, creating, publishing and promoting poetry. We aim to make poetry highly visible, accessible, vibrant and relevant for all. Our projects are created in collaboration with a spectrum of poets, communities, partners and schools for positive impact in core areas of

Environment | Amplification and Visibility
First Nations | Marginalised Voices | Learning



88+

88+ major projects



219,242+

219,242+ students engaged in schools and correctional centres

279+

279+ cross-sector partners, 10 international



1,415+

1,415+ poets commissioned and employed



32,343+

32,343+ poems created and published

2.1M+

2.1M+ local, national, international audiences p.a.



4.8M+

4.8M+ digital reach p.a

20 years

20 years experience

OUR TEAM

> I would remind her that courage comes in waves, and while not every year is the same, day by day, week by week, we deserve to be loved in every beat.
>
> ~ Courtney Peppernell from 'Be A Friend to Yourself' commissioned for Poetry Month

Patron

John B. Fairfax AO

Board

Chairman
Hon. Michael Pembroke

Treasurer
Craig Lawn (outgoing)

Member
Judy Foster

Member
Daryn McKenny

Member
Andrew FitzSimons

Member
Martin Green

Observer
Annie Chen

First Nations Advisory

Artistic/Poetic
Jeanine Leanne, Wiradjuri poet and academic

Language Mentor
Daryn McKenny, Director Miromaa Language Centre

Staff

Artistic Director
Dr Tamryn Bennett

Development Director
Sarah Gilchrist (December 2022)

Development Director
Rebecca Cuschieri (January 2023)

Senior Project Manager
David Stavanger

Senior Project Manager
Anne-Marie Te Whiu (December 2022)

Senior Project Manager - First Nations
Nicole Smede (January 2023)

General Manager/Producer
Lorin Reid

Digital Producer
Izzy Roberts-Orr

Administration/Digital Coordinator
Natalie Bühler

and our dedicated interns and volunteers

redroompoetry.org/about



OUR POETS

Achol Juk NSW
Adara Enthaler NSW
Alan Fyfe WA
Alex Gallagher NSW
Alex Lee QLD
Ali Cobby Eckermann SA
Ali Whitelock NSW
Alise Blayney NSW
Aloma Davis VIC
Amelia Filmer-Sankey NSW
Andrew Galan ACT
Andrew Sutherland WA
Angela Peita QLD
Anna Jacobson QLD
Anna Spargo-Ryan VIC
Anne Casey NSW
Anthea Yang VIC
Anthony Mannix NSW
Archie Roach VIC
Arlea Whelan NSW
Aud Mason-Hyde SA
Audrey Molloy NSW
Bebe Backhouse VIC
Bert Spinks TAS
Betelhem Zekele VIC
Bonny Cassidy VIC
Brendan Cowell NSW
Brenna Quinlan WA
Briohny Doyle NSW
Bron Bateman WA
Bronte Campbel VIC
Bruce Pascoe VIC
Catherine Noske WA
Chris Lynch VIC
Christian Best SA
Clodia Stanislaus NSW
Courtney Peppernell NSW
Dakota Feirer QLD
Daley Rangi NSW
Damon Young TAS
Dan Hogan NSW
Daniel Browning NSW
Darby Hudson VIC
David Clark NT
Deborah Marcus NSW
Denni Proctor TAS
DOBBY / Ryan Clapham NSW
Dorothy Porter VIC
Ela Fornalska VIC
Elfie Shiosaki WA
Ella O'Keefe VIC
Ellen van Neerven QLD
Eloise Grills VIC
Es Foong
Esther Ottaway TAS
Ethan Bell NSW
Eunice Andrada NSW
Evie Wyld N/A
Fazileh Mansour Beigi QLD
Felicity Plunkett NSW
Fi Peel (The Lived Perspective)
Fiona Wright NSW
Gabrielle Journey Jones NSW
Gavin Yuan Gao QLD
Gemma Mahadeo
Georgina Reid NSW
Golestan Hatami VIC
Grace Tame TAS
Hani Abdile NSW
Heather Taylor Johnson SA
Heidi Everett
Helena Fox NSW
Holly Isemonger NSW
Huda Fadlelmawla QLD
Hugh Winterflood NT
Isabella Luna NSW
Jacqui Malins ACT
Jamie Lau
Janet Rogers Canada
Jazz Money NSW
Jean Burke NSW
Jeanine Leane VIC
Jen Chen NSW
Jenny Hedley VIC
Jessica Wilkinson VIC
Jill Jones SA
Jocelyn Deane VIC
Joel Davison VIC
Joel Ma VIC
John Kinsella WA
John Mukky Burke NSW
Jonathan Dunk VIC
Josie/Jocelyn Deane VIC
Joy Harjo USA
Judith Crispin ACT
Justin Heazlewood TAS
Kate Lilley NSW
Kathryn Lomer TAS
Kelly Leah Vincent SA
Kelly-lee Hickey NT
Kenji Kinz NSW
Kim Cheng Boey Singapore
Kirli Saunders NSW
KJ VIC
Kobie Dee NSW
Kristen de Kline VIC
Lachlan Brown NSW
Lajos Hamers NSW
Laniyuk VIC
Laura Jean McKay QLD
Lauren Chapman Carpenter NSW
Laurie May NT
Leanne Betasamoaske Simpson N/A
Lesh Karan VIC
Lillian Rodrigues–Pang NSW
Lionel Fogarty QLD
Lisa Gorton VIC
Lorna Munro NSW
Lotovale Junior Nanai N/A
Luke Davies N/A
Luke Patterson NSW
Lyndsay Urquhart NSW
Maddie Godfrey WA
Maja Chodorowski QLD
Manisha Anjali VIC
Maria Takolander VIC
Maria Tumarkin VIC
Mark Tredinnick NSW
Mastaneh Azarnia VIC
Matehaere Hope Haami (Hope One) QLD
Melinda Smith ACT
Mia (Qing) Nie VIC
Michelle Cahill NSW
Michelle Rickerby NSW
Mike Ladd SA
Miranda Gillam Grant SA
Misha the maniac NSW
Mohammad Awad NSW
Mother Tongue Multilingual Poetry ACT
Munira Tabassum Ahmed NSW
Nadia Rhook WA
Narges Alizadeh NSW
Nat's What I Reckon NSW
Natalie Harkin SA
Nicole Smede NSW
Nils Rune Persen Utsi Norway
Nina Oyama
Olivia Hamilton NSW
Omar Musa NSW
Omar Sakr NSW
Paris Rose NSW
Paula Keogh VIC
Peter Goldsworthy SA
Peter Ramm NSW
Pidj Flavell WA
PiO VIC
Rachael Mead SA
Rae Lancaster QLD
Rae White QLD
Rebecca Rushbrook
Rebecca Young TAS
Renee Pettitt-Schipp WA
Rev Ghanaei QLD
Robyn Lambird NSW
Rohan King TAS
Rosie Bogumil NSW
Rozanna Lilley NSW
Ruby Hillsmith VIC
Saanjana Kapoor VIC
Saba Vasefi NSW
Sacha Horler NSW
Sachem Parkin-Owens QLD
Sam Quyen Huynh
Samson Soulsby NSW
Sandra Renew ACT
Sandy Jeffs VIC
Sara Saleh NSW
Sarah Holland-Batt NSW
Scott-Patrick Mitchell WA
Sharon Mason NSW
Shastra Deo QLD
Sigbjørn Skåden N/A
Sim Kaur NSW
Sime Knezevic NSW
Sisonke Msimang WA
Skylar Winter WA
Sophie Bellotti VIC
Spencer Barberis NSW
Steph Amir VIC
Stephen Edgar NSW
Steven Herrick NSW
Steven Oliver QLD
Susie Walsh NSW
Talya Rubin WA
Tamryn Bennett NSW
Tanaya Harper WA
Tenzin Choegyal QLD
Tess Ridgway NSW
Tim Heffernan NSW
Timmah Ball VIC
Toby Fitch NSW
Tony Birch VIC
Vikki Parsley NSW
Warren Foster NSW
Winnie Dunn NSW
Yasaman Bagherishahkhali NSW
Yassmin Abdel-Magied N/A
Zeadala NSW
Zen Dogg (aka Durbidge) WA
Zhi Yi Cham ACT

redroompoetry.org/poets/

2022 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Commissioning and publishing more poets than ever before across all styles, stages and communities, our 2022 program exceeded all expectations with outcomes including:

> Your tower of books has a logic: the oldest go first.
> And you will leave this to
> your children.
>
> ~Damon Young from 'Reading Pile' commissioned for Poetry Month 2022

269

269 poets and artists paid, performing and engaged

195

195 activities and events delivered live and digitally

143

poems commissioned

5,700

5,700 student poems for POEM FOREST with 230,927+ engagements with learning resources and content

4.8M+

4.8M+ audiences via digital reach and media partnerships

41

41 workshops delivered across school, mental health and all ages spaces

93%

93% of poets, audience and participants agreed that 2023 programs moved and inspired them, offered interesting ideas/ programs and that they would attend something similar again

41+

41+ First Nations poets, artists, Elders and Language Custodians engaged

2.1M+

2.1M+ audiences via live events, workshops, installations

44+

partner collaborations

POEM FOREST

OUTCOMES

- **12 Elders and poets** commissioned and engaged
- **5,700** student poems created and published
- **5700+ trees** planted at Mt Annan
- **3,400+ students** engaged in workshops
- **230,927+ engagements** with learning resources and content
- **24 media** features including ABC RN, Teen Breathe Magazine and Coal Coast Magazine
- **97%** of poets, participants and partners felt enthusiasm for the project (Culture Counts)

Created by Red Room Poetry, in partnership with The Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan and supported by Principal Patron, John B. Fairfax AO, POEM FOREST is a free nature poetry prize that invites students and teachers to use their words to make tangible climate action. For every nature poem received a tree is planted to help heal critically endangered habitats and create a POEM FOREST for future generations.

In 2022, we received over 5,700 entries, with a tree planted for each. Our focus deepened with writing and tree planting workshops, digital sessions with national reach, and the development of new partnerships with Wollongong City Council and South Coast communities, placing Yuin Elders and Custodians at the heart of the project.

"Nature is dying. But I am only 11. I don't have the courage to stand up. But with Red Room Poetry, I felt that I could tell the world how much nature is dying. And even if my poem does not get picked, just remember, I still care about nature and I will do anything, in my power, to save it."

~ Joshua V, Year 5, Cheltenham Primary School, VIC

"When I write poems it feels like nothing can stop me and I am imagining the poem and feeling the forest in my heart. I am always so happy when I write poems."

~ Kristen S, Year 4, Sacré Coeur, VIC

Poems and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/poem-forest/2022/

"It's an honour to be a judge for this year's POEM FOREST. I found that our next generation of poets are truth-tellers, they're conservationists and they believe in the hope of radical action. They weave poetic techniques seamlessly and paint pictures with their words of the world we live in, and the one we long for. Both worlds feel safer in their hands, and I can't wait to see what our next generation of writers, poets, truth-tellers and game-changers create next."

~ Kirli Saunders OAM



The tug of the current
The tickle of the wind
The curve of a leaf
The future peels away with the
patchy bark of the ancient gums

~ Adele L from 'Remember', Year 5, Westgarth Primary School (VIC)





POETRY MONTH

OUTCOMES

- **130 poets** commissioned, published and performing
- **22 live and digital events,** with sold-out National Gala, state showcases and workshops
- **31 daily poems,** reflections, writing prompts and online competition
- **10 First Nations Australian** and International poets creating collaborative poems
- **18 partners** including The Wheeler Centre, MONA, NGA, SLQ and NZ Poetry Day
- **20 media features** including ABC RN and TV, SMH, Canberra Times, and ArtsHub
- **1.3M+ audiences** across radio, digital and live platforms
- **96.5% of poets, participants and partners rated** the quality of their Poetry Month experience/ programming as Excellent-Good (Culture Counts)

RR created **Poetry Month** (1-31 August) to amplify and celebrate Australian poetry locally and internationally. Our second annual consolidated Poetry Month as a world class program of high-profile commissions, national events, performances, residencies, showcases, publications, professional development, public initiatives, workshops, competitions, and community-led activities, elevating Australian poets and poetry in all of its forms.

In 2022, new elements were introduced with Youth Ambassadors, the inaugural National Poetry Month Gala, Showcases, digital events and the City of Sydney Poets in Residence program.

Poems and partners >redroompoetry.org/projects/poetry-month/2022/



The lotus flower
Lurks in murk, and mud and dark
Biding time, keeping count
Til it bursts forth in light and bright and colour
Paragon of patience, antithesis of doubt

~ Bronte Campbell from 'Olympic Hour' commissioned for POETRY MONTH

The Poetry Month Gala is a prime example of Red Room's innovative efforts at making Australian poetry more accessible to the wider public, not only through broadcasting and livestreaming but also in the line-up, which featured not only contemporary poets like myself, but also actors, comedians, and singers. Red Room understands that poetry is for everyone, and the feedback I've received from my participation in Poetry Month underscores the truth of that.

~ Omar Sakr, 30in30 Commissioned Poet and National Poetry Month Gala



The WA Poetry Month Showcase was so refreshing, the curation was excellent, diverse and cohesive all at the same time.

~ Elfie Shiosaki, 30in30 Commissioned Poet and WA Poetry Month Showcase

RED ROOM POETRY FELLOWSHIP

OUTCOMES

- **11 poets commissioned**
- **26 poems published** and audio/video recorded
- **7 workshops** and events at Bundanon and online
- **98%** of participants said the Fellowship contributed to their practice development (Culture Counts)
- TBC audiences across radio, digital and live platforms

Encouraging poetic excellence, the *RR Poetry Fellowship* recognises the achievements and artistic goals of contemporary Australian poets previously commissioned by RR.

Our 2022 Fellow, Scott-Patrick Mitchell, was selected from a field of 40 applications spanning all styles and stages of contemporary Australian poetry. Scott-Patrick 's Fellowship project *Antipodean Sea Garden: Knowing Perth Canyon*, hopes to raise awareness of WA's Perth Canyon and responds to Red Room's *Writing Water* project. Scott-Patrick undertook a Bundanon residency alongside our 2021 Fellow Ellen van Neerven whose residency was delayed due to Covid.



Our generous Fellowship supporters also enabled 9 shortlisted poets to be commissioned to create new poems aligned with themes of their Fellowship application.

Poems and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/fellowship/2022/

do not look at this as space
to be travelled
but rather space
to transcend

~ Scott Patrick Mitchell from 'on contemplating 70kms of coastline'



I am honoured, humbled and blown away to be awarded the 2022 Red Room Poetry Fellowship, making me the first West Australian poet to receive this incredible opportunity. Special thanks to Dr Tamryn Bennett for your ongoing support and to Red Room Poetry in general for creating opportunities such as this for the Australian poetry community. My 2022 project is titled Antipodean Sea Garden: Knowing Perth Canyon. I have been fascinated by Perth Canyon, located off the WA coastline, for about six years now. This project provides me the space and time to walk 70 km of the Swan Coastal Plain located on Whadjuk Noongar Country, sitting with land and sea, listening, feeling, imagining and writing work in response to this experience.

~ Scott-Patrick Mitcell, Red Room Poetry Fellow 2022

POETIC MOMENTS

AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY





Making meaningful connections between poetry, people and place, Poetic Moments creates accessible and highly visible public installations and activations. In collaboration with communities and partners we bring poetry to everyday experiences on buses, boardwalks, trails, trains, lightboxes and more.

Amplifying poetry across our program and adding to permanent poetic installations nationally, our 2022 Poetic Moments included:

- **New Shoots: Garden of Poems** poetic trails at Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and Victoria
- **Muru Nanga Mai** poems in language with audio installation at Sydney Olympic Park
- **Storybox** poetic installations for International Women's Day and POEM FOREST

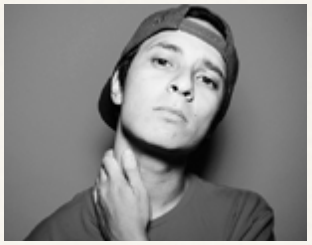
Poems and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/poetic-moments/

FAIR TRADE

AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY, FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

> And our mere existence
> Is our greatest resistance
>
> ~ Dobby and Slincraze from 'Identity'

Launched as part of *Poetry Month* in 2021, *Fair Trade* unfolded as a standalone Red Room project throughout 2022, commissioning five Australian First Nation poets to write in poetic collaboration with five international First Nation poets from Aotearoa (Māori), Guåhan or Guam (Chamorro), Turtle Island / Canada (Mohawk/ Tuscarora) and Norway (Sámi) and facilitate vital and urgent international First Nations poetic conversations.





The Fair Trade project connected me in conversation with Declan Fry, a critic, writer, poet, essayist, and descendant of the Yorta Yorta who was born on Wongatha country in Kalgoorlie. Through this unique collaboration, I was able to learn about Declan's poetry and culture and make connections with my own Pacific Islander culture (I am a Chamoru originally from Guam in Micronesia). Being in community with Declan increased my sense of international sovereignty and reciprocity.

~ Craig Santos Perez, commissioned poet Fair Trade

OUTCOMES

- **10 First Nations** poets commissioned
- **1 Fair Trade event** at Sydney Writers' Festival
- **2 digital workshops** delivered during Poetry Month
- **1 Australia - NZ digital showcase** in partnership with NZ Poetry Day

Poems and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/fair-trade/

FIRST NATIONS

Njarrang Mirrirahjaang Wuriwuripa Boodjanglaali
Waaglpa Dharan.ba Mungaroolaalijaang
Yanggamarre Dharranjyangya Burraga
Ngurajaangga
Biroongaanga





Red Room Poetry is dedicated to amplifying First Nations voices through poetic projects led by and created in collaboration with Elders, Custodians and communities. Working alongside First Nations artists and Custodians our programs are delivered with multiple partners and communities celebrating languages and cultures through the practice of poetry, music, dance, and art.

We are currently collaborating with 40+ First Nations poets, artists, Elders and Custodians across various projects, placing First Nations people and communities at the heart of our programming.

Through conversation and consultation we continue to explore ways to work together, championing self-determination and ensuring our programs make meaningful connections for and between Elders, Custodians and young people.

"I've been writing poetry since I was 13yrs old I'm now 57 and finally a Published Poet in language as well, thank you Joel Deaves Tamryn Bennett, Lyndsay Urquhart and all involved with the Red Room Poetry I'm so ever grateful for your time and support thank you again!! Never ever give up on your dreams"

~ Aunty Lauren Chapman Carpenter, POEM FOREST Yuin poet and Elder

Places and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/

> Amongst the sky sunshine and birds travel and go through the clouds
> singing we have to come together on the land we are proud
>
> ~ Lauren Carpenter/Chapman from 'Bloodlines'.

Being commissioned by Red Room Poetry as a writer for Poetry Month was a deep and honourable experience. As an emerging Indigenous writer, it allowed me to feel my words were having an impact, as I'd hoped they would. Writing poetry is a greatly different experience to performing poetry, and the opportunity to do both, nationally and internationally, was a powerful gift I used in my growth, awareness and blooming.

Being commissioned by RRP left me with a profound appreciation and gratitude, and a strong readiness for where my writing career will take me next. I believe opportunities exactly like this are the necessary building blocks of a proud and talented national community of writers, strongly and boldly elevated by the presence of Indigenous and First Nations words.

~ Bebe Backhouse, 30in30 Commissioned Poet and VIC Poetry Month Gala

OUTCOMES

- **41+ First Nations poets,** artists, Elders and Language Custodians engaged
- **75+ First Nations students** engaged in POEM FOREST workshops with Elders





YOUTH









> In the valley, the wattles drip with yellow,
> Revealing patches of old farmland
> Where mother nature has reclaimed the slopes.
>
> ~ Hannah F from 'In The Valley' Year 10, Kingston High School (TAS)

POETIC LEARNING

RR's youth programs nurture future generations of poets through a range of intensive creative workshops, poetry prizes, learning resources, representation, publications and performance opportunities as well as professional development for emerging poets and teachers.

In 2022 our youth programs included *POEM FOREST* and *Poetry Month* Youth Ambassadors. We focused on sustainable digital delivery, uplifting youth voices with professional opportunities, while also providing free learning resources and workshops with commissioned poets to inspire young people and teachers to create, perform and publish poetry in meaningful ways.

Poems and resources > redroompoetry.org/poetic-learning/

I don't really care if I win, I just want a tree to be planted.

~ Ginger V, Year 3, Chewton Primary School, VIC

I wrote this poem on behalf of all trees that are carelessly logged for human needs. I am passionate about protecting and preserving our natural world and would write a thousand poems if a tree was planted each time!

~ Emma O, Year 6, Broome North Primary School, WA

OUTCOMES

- **7 youth poets** professionally engaged or commissioned
- **9100+ students** creating poetry through workshops and projects
- **5700+ student poems** published in our digital library
- **563 schools engaged**
- **230,927+ digital reach** of learning resources and webpages
- **140,791 views** of top 10 educational resource videos via YouTube
- **30% of total website users are youth** (18-24yo) the highest of any age demographic

MAD POETRY





MAD Poetry creates safe writing spaces for experienced and emerging voices with lived-experience of mental health issues/illness to express how they see the world. In 2022 we partnered with Upswell Publishing on a groundbreaking anthology *Admissions: Voices Within Mental Health* led by David Stavanger and released during Mental Health Week in October.

The collection includes 30 emerging poets selected through a RR-led public submissions process alongside 20 lived-experience poets previously commissioned by RR. This year also saw the consolidation of the national online workshop series across October, and partnered events as part of The Big Anxiety Festival.

> To other people it's like I've emptied a bag of feathers over their heads – the specifics spill and spook, white ghosts they fan out – never quite landing
>
> ~ Tess Ridgway, from 'Bag of Feathers' selected for Admissions

OUTCOMES

- **5 poets commissioned**
- **30 emerging poets** published in Admissions
- **24 poets engaged** for online workshops and events
- **9 lived** experience workshops
- **7 live** and online events
- **181 workshop** participants

Great variety of presenters and exercises and poetry styles in the reading of peoples poems. Informative, fun, inclusive and a wonderful opportunity to share poetry. Thanks!

~ Participant feedback, Culture Counts evaluation

The work produced and published this year for MAD Poetry is such a fantastic and well-rounded representation of the community that the project uplifts. There really isn't anything else like it in the poetry space in Australia.

~ Ruby Hillsmith, MAD Poetry commissioned poet



Places and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/mad-poetry

WRITING IN RESISTANCE

AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY, MARGINALISED VOICES, LEARNING



Writing in Resistance participants at AGNSW for Refugee Week 2022. Image Tawfik Elgazzar

For two decades, I'm nomad
from this continent to another
Iran, Pakistan, Indonesia, Nauru
and Australia now.
Nowhere on the earth
embraces me to settle.
I touched tyranny
in the closed camp,
suffered from indefinite separation
but my punishment
does not know the end.

~ Narges Alizadeh from 'Indefinite Displacement'

OUTCOMES

- **8 poets** commissioned and engaged
- **2 media partnerships**
- **1 high profile event**
- **100% of participants** felt a sense of opportunity and 97% also felt a sense of Belonging (Culture Counts)

Writing in Resistance is led by journalist, scholar and poet Dr Saba Vasefi in collaboration with RR. To honour refugee voices, throughout 2022, Saba and RR commissioned and published a series of poems aligned with significant days of international justice, peace, human rights, Refugee Week and elimination of violence against women. Through Saba's dedicated mentoring, editing and translation, a special event was held at AGNSW during Refugee Week featuring women and non-binary poets formerly detained on Nauru.

After years of experiencing disrespect and dehumanization in Australia it was the first time I could travel free and be respected and welcomed. ~ Fazileh Mansourbegi, 2022

Writing in Resistance Participant

I'm full of gratitude to you for making a precious memory for us. I will never forget your transformational leadership embraced and welcomed us genuinely, warmly, and respectfully.

~2022 Writing in Resistance Participant

Poems and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/writing-in-resistance

VOICES IN THE CAGE–
Poetry by Afghan women

AMPLIFICATION AND VISIBILITY, MARGINALISED VOICES

My dream and my father's smiling face
They took those from me,
but at least bread should not be taken

~ Fatima Ahmadi from '[The city became empty]'

Voices in the Cage shares the pain, hopes and sorrow of women in Afghanistan through poetry. Led by the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR), with support from Oranges & Sardines Foundation and Red Room Poetry, *Voices in the Cage* is a collection of poems by 24 female poets in Afghanistan published for International Women's Day.

"The women featured in Voices in the Cage are thankful for poetry as an extraordinary opportunity to speak, share their situations and raise their voices. With few other ways to raise their voice under the current regime, Afghan women describe this poetry project as a way of healing and sharing their experiences in the face of war and oppression."

~ Najeeba Wazefadost, Founder & Chief Executive Director, APNOR



OUTCOMES

- **24 poets** commissioned, paid and engaged
- **1 media feature**
- **1 Storybox** public installation for International Women's Day

Poems and partners > redroompoetry.org/projects/voices-in-the-cage

OUR 2022 SUPPORTERS

Red Room Poetry is a registered not-for-profit organisation and we rely on donations, in kind and pro bono support to achieve impact. We give heartfelt thanks to our invaluable supporters, partners, collaborators, and the generous individuals who help make poetry meaningful, strengthen communities and nurture new voices.

Red Room Poetry is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body, and by the NSW Government through Create NSW.

PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS
Australia Council for the Arts
Create NSW
City of Sydney
Coordinare
Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund

PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS
John B. Fairfax AO
Oranges & Sardines Foundation
Bret Walker AO SC
Tim Game SC

MAJOR DONORS
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Andrew FitzSimons
Craig and Joy Lawn

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Pantera Press Foundation
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Marion Heathcote and Brian Burfitt
Hon. Justice François Kunc
Kate Matcham
Seamus Quick and Sabrina Meier
Paul Ruiz
Annalise Thomas
Mark Wakely
Sally White OAM

and other generous friends

Support Red Room Poetry

Help us make poetry highly visible, vibrant, relevant and accessible – especially to those who face the greatest barriers to creative opportunities – by donating via our online donation form.

To explore potential partnership opportunities, contact our Development Director, Rebecca Cuschieri, at rebecca@redroompoetry.org

2022 POETIC PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Red Room Poetry deeply values our poetic partners and collaborators who support meaningful poetic projects and positive collective impact. We're thankful to all the poets, artists and creatives that inspire and encourage us.

98+ partners and collaborators p.a.

Corporate
Aileen Sage Architects, Landcom, Baker McKenzie, Corban & Blair

Culture
107 Projects, Affirm Press, Art Gallery of NSW, Artology, Australian Museum, Australian National Maritime Museum, Australian Poetry, Brisbane Writers Festival, Bundanon, Cordite, Digital Writers' Festival, Fremantle Press, Giromondo, Magabala Books, MONA, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, National Gallery of Australia, National Young Writers Festival, Ockham NZ Book Awards, Pantera Press Foundation, Pro Bono Australia, Queensland Poetry Festival, Recent Work Press, Red Dirt Poetry Festival, Rizzeria, South Coast Writers Centre, Sweatshop, Sydney Living Museums, Sydney Writers' Festival, TarraWarra Biennial, The Wheeler Centre, University of Queensland Press, Upswell Publishing, Wellways, Wollongong Art Gallery, Writers SA

Education
Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, DART, Miromaa Language & Technology Centre, QUT, Reconciliation Australia and NSW, Department of Education and school communities and libraries nationally, UNSW, UOW, UTS

Environment
Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan, Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (Cranbourne Gardens), Sydney Olympic Park Authority, Wollongong Botanic Garden, Wonderground

Government
Aboriginal Affairs NSW, City of Fremantle, Department of Education, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW, Transport NSW, Waverley Council, Wollongong City Council

Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD, Mental Health Commission of NSW, Survivors of Suicide and Friends

Media
Community Radio Network, The Guardian, Storybox

FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	Year ended 31 December 2022 $	Year ended 31 December 2022 $
Donations and non-government grants	15	520,902	488,870
Government grants		531,860	374,523
Other revenue	4	53,798	193,629
Total revenue		**1,106,560**	**1,057,022**
Employee expenses		(297,647)	(326,644)
Business development expenses		(80,214)	(85,042)
Artsworker expenses			
Poetry commissions and appearance fees		**(192,137)**	**(135,111)**
Production costs		(125,372)	(94,697)
Contractor expenses		(81,354)	(38,988)
Consumables and office expenses		(47,464)	(47,468)
Publicity and promotion		(24,786)	(17,089)
Accounting and audit		(45,658)	(42,491)
Insurances		(17,732)	(17,201)
Travel costs		(15,295)	(13,552)
Repairs and maintenance		(16,270)	(4,245)
Depreciation expenses		**(255)**	**(385)**
Other expenses		**(2,335)**	**(26,374)**
Results from operating activities		**(21,758)**	**(11,462)**
Finance income		138,283	196,273
Surplus before income tax expense		**4,178**	**1,050**
Income tax expense		**142,461**	**197,323**
Surplus after income tax expense		**142,461**	**197,323**
Total comprehensive income for the year			

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2022

	Notes	As at 31 December 2022 $	As at 31 December 2021 $
Assets Current			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	682,768	755,666
Trade and other receivables	8	21,748	16,246
Other financial assets	7	800,000	697,751
Total current assets		**1,504,516**	**1,469,663**
Assets Non-Current			
Plant and equipment		5,970	3,302
Total non-current assets		5,970	3,302
Total assets		**1,472,965**	**956,232**
Liabilities Current			
Trade and other payables	9	80,437	81,588
Deferred revenue	10	400,289	499,525
Employee entitlements	11	29,731	37,588
Total current liabilities		-	
Total current liabilities		**510,457**	**618,701**
Liabilities Non-Current			
Employee entitlements	11	23,763	20,459
Total non-current liabilities		**23,763**	**20,459**
Total liabilities		**534,220**	**639,160**
Net assets		**976,266**	**833,805**
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		**976,266**	**833,805**
Total equity		**976,266**	**833,805**

Full financial report available on request, including notes which should be read in conjunction with these statements.



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Design: Alphabet Studio