

the South Sydney Herald

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Street Side Medics Waterloo launch

While Street Side Medics, a not-for-profit, GP-led mobile medical service dedicated to people experiencing homelessness, has been providing clinics at OzHarvest Waterloo every Thursday, 10am-12noon since September 18, the official launch of the service was held November 6. Services provided include: general health check-ups, chronic disease screening, acute infectious screening, immunisations, pathology services, diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions, screening tests and Medicare care plans, nutritional advice, minor surgical procedures and referrals to appropriate medical specialists. It is a Medicare bulk billing service, but for those without Medicare, they have a no-turn-away policy and will see all patients free of charge.

Author: Lyn Turnbull Photos: Michelle Haywood

Striking jersey for Class of '26

EDUCATION

ANDREW COLLIS

Marrickville High School's Class of 2026 is standing out in style thanks to a bold new jersey design created by Year 11 student Kay Lanzky, 17.

Kay, a proud young Aboriginal woman who lives with her granddad in Woolloomooloo, was chosen to design the senior jersey for next year's graduating class. Known at school for her

drawing and graphic design skills, she was excited to take on the challenge.

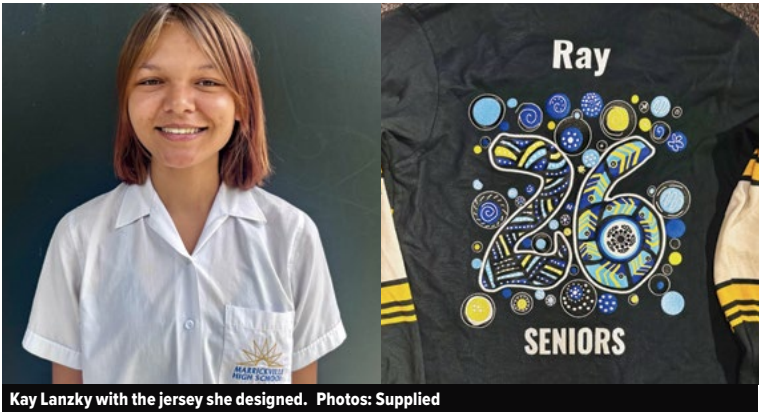
"My school asked me to design the Year 12 jersey, so I made a design on my phone and gave it to them," Kay said. "I worked with a First Nations teacher to gather different ideas and used an app called Ibis Paint."

Her original concept featured two snakes, symbolising the cycle of life and the students' journey into a new chapter. The snakes also inspired the snake-like numerals that appear on the back of the final jersey.

Although the principal decided to remove the snakes because they looked too similar to the football team Inter Milan FC, Kay's design still shines through.

The finished jersey includes spirals, circles, dots and lines in the school colours — dark blue, yellow and white. The symbols represent connection, growth and unity.

"The strongest feedback I got was everyone wished the snakes could've stayed," Kay said. "But I couldn't go against the principal." Kay's artistic touch has made



Kay Lanzky with the jersey she designed. Photos: Supplied

the jersey one of the most memorable in the school's history. "It still feels special," she said. "It's about who we are as a class — we're all connected and moving

forward together."

Kay plans to continue her art studies and will sit her HSC exams in 2026. She hopes to pursue a future in design after school.

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NEWS

news@ssh.com.au
Phone Lyn 0400 008 338

ADVERTISING

adverts@ssh.com.au

MAILING ADDRESS:

PO Box 3288
Redfern NSW 2016

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FOUNDING EDITOR

Trevor Davies (25.5.1956 – 14.6.2011)

MANAGING EDITOR

Anna Jahjah

NEWS EDITOR

Lyn Turnbull

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Andrew Collis

FIRST PEOPLES

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ENVIRONMENT

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RUGBY LEAGUE

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Stockland Waterloo South Concept revealed

URBAN DESIGN

GEOFF TURNBULL

STOCKLAND'S proposal is a major rework of the 2022 plan, which had four towers and everything else up to 13 storeys.

The 2022 approval added 10 per cent design excellence floor space to the original proposal. Stockland says this cannot be accommodated within the 2022 controls, necessitating planning control changes to deliver the approved space. Stockland is arguing its case by showing where it can add the extra floor space on the original 2022 plan. This leads to its new proposal that accommodates the extra space, but also has to provide improved design and solar outcomes.

The resulting plan retains four longer towers that cannot go higher due to flight restrictions and includes nine buildings between 15 and 22 storeys, delivering a height mix similar to the earlier Preferred Masterplan that preceded Council's 2022 proposal. With design excellence, it delivers more than the 3,000 homes expected in 2022.

Stockland also shows where at least 30 per cent social and 20 per cent affordable housing will be located. Affordable housing provider City West says it will seek funding to have all



Artist's impression of the Waterloo Renewal Project, from page 10 of the Waterloo Renewal Project – Pre-lodgement consultation on Concept Application and rezoning – Community information and feedback session (November 3 2025).

affordable housing in perpetuity, although only 7 per cent is initially guaranteed in perpetuity. While most of the social housing will be run by Link Wentworth, Birribee Housing will manage 20 per cent of the social and 15 per cent of the affordable housing for Aboriginal tenants.

Stockland is concurrently negotiating with planning bodies and finalising its proposal before a formal exhibition in 2026.

The consultation information does not yet include all the details people want to see, such as shadow diagrams, tree plans, private vs public space, car parking entrances and traffic, and how design excellence will be achieved. One consequence of the taller building is more space at ground level with greater building setbacks to the streets and potentially more space for trees. Stockland is also collecting

information on how people may be affected by the development and how any impacts might be mitigated. People's input on the proposal or impacts at this early stage is more likely to influence the outcome than waiting for the final proposal.

SSH

The proposal and details of consultation opportunities can be found at www.waterloorenewal.com.au. Geoff Turnbull is the REDWatch Spokesperson

Have Your Say on the plans for Waterloo South

Come along to information and feedback sessions

Tuesday 18 November	Saturday 22 November	Tuesday 25 November
Information and feedback session	Information and feedback session	Tenant-only feedback session on key topics
11am – 1pm	1 – 3pm	1 – 3pm
Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre (95 Wellington Street, Opposite OzHarvest)	Redfern Oval Community Room (off Chalmers Street)	Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre
		Lunch provided

Drop-in at Waterloo Connect

95 Wellington Street (Opposite OzHarvest)
10am – 4pm | Monday – Friday

Meet members of the Renewal Partner team, see the draft plan, ask questions and share feedback.

For information about all activities visit waterloorenewal.com.au



Contact us



hello@waterloorenewal.com.au



1800 997 318



Stockland



BIRRIBEE HOUSING



CITY WEST HOUSING



Link Wentworth

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney



Dear SSH readers

We're fast approaching the end of the year and the Albanese Labor Government is continuing apace rolling out practical measures to help Australians and assist with the cost of living.

Protecting children

The Albanese Labor Government is backing Australian families, parents and kids by delaying access to social media until the age of 16.

From 10 December 2025, social media platforms will be subject to the social media minimum age law. By delaying access, we are protecting young Australians at a critical stage of their development, giving them three more years to build real world connections and online resilience.



For more information about the ban visit:

Protecting Australian artists and their creative works

The Albanese Government stands with Australia's creative industries by strengthening copyright laws to protect creatives and their works from being used without permission and without payment to train artificial intelligence. We are ruling out a Text and Data Mining Exception in Australian copyright laws.

Fairer work contracts for low paid and young professionals

Imagine being a health worker or a graduate engineer earning under \$80,000, only to discover that if you quit, your contract stops you from working in the same occupation – indefinitely.

Traditionally used for senior executives, non-compete clauses now cover around 1 in 5 Australian employees, more than 3 million workers including teachers, tradespeople, technicians, babysitters and carers.

We are banning non-compete clauses for Australian employees who earn less than the Fair Work Act's high-income threshold - \$183 100. Australians deserve the chance to earn more and to move forward in their careers.

Helping survivors of institutional child sexual abuse

We are making it easier for people who were abused as children in institutions to obtain compensation through the National Redress Scheme. We are expanding the criteria for sexual abuse to include procedures that were conducted in medical settings.

Often referred to by victims and survivors as virginity testing, this invasive procedure was a shameful contravention of basic human rights.

Women who were subjected to it as children can now apply for compensation through the National Redress Scheme.

We have also appointed additional Independent Decision Makers to increase the consistency and speed of Redress outcomes for survivors.

Since the establishment of the National Redress Scheme in 2018 – following the federal Labor Government initiated Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse – over \$1.7 billion dollars in redress payments have been paid to survivors.

Greater, more affordable, choice

Women are set to benefit from cheaper medicines and better health care thanks to the next stage of the Albanese Government's Women's Health Package. From 1 November 2025, we are making it cheaper and easier to access IUDs and contraceptive implants under the Medicare Benefits Schedule and adding new contraceptive pills to the PBS.

Mandating cash acceptance a step closer

The Albanese Government is acting so that people who rely on cash can still use it for essential purchases. We want to ensure Australians won't be left behind for grocery and fuel purchases as many businesses move to cashless payment.

Protecting renters' personal information

Instead of handing over copies of your driver's licence, passport, bank statements and payslips to real estate agents, soon you'll be able to confirm your identity online with the click of a button.

We are working with accredited Digital ID providers, CDR data recipients and real estate entities to pilot a system where renters can securely share verified financial data directly with the agent.

Improving public transport for people with disabilities

For the first time in 20 years we're updating the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 so that people with disabilities can plan and undertake their journeys with greater certainty.

We want to: improve accessibility at stops and stations; make it easier to get on and off; make it easier to plan your trip; ensure public transport staff understand their responsibilities in assisting people with disability; and improve safety and amenity onboard.

If you need assistance with a federal issue, please contact my Sydney electorate office.

Tanya

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP
Federal Member for Sydney

1A Great Buckingham Street, Redfern NSW 2016 T: 9379 0700 E: Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au

Authorised by T. Plibersek, ALP, 1a Great Buckingham Street, Redfern 2016



JENNY LEONG MP
MEMBER FOR NEWTOWN



Together we can protect human rights in NSW

A Human Rights Act is a powerful tool to ensure that dignity and respect for everyone in our communities is at the heart of the decisions that members of Parliament and the government of the day make on behalf of the people of NSW. At a time when everyone is feeling the burden of divisions, local and global challenges, and financial, societal and environmental pressures, the Bill seeks to do something in the interests of all people in NSW: to unite and connect us, to raise the standard, to aspire to ensure dignity, respect and justice for all.

In October I introduced a private members Bill for a Human Rights Act in NSW parliament. This Bill was drafted in consultation with human rights experts, including some members of the Human Rights for NSW alliance, which is made up of more than 102 organisations that support increased human rights protections in NSW and a public inquiry into the Bill.

The foundations on which this Bill stands were laid nearly 80 years ago, when the UN General Assembly voted to establish the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Queensland, Victoria, and the ACT all have Human Rights Acts - in the case of the ACT it has been in place for 20 years. South Australia is also on its way to establishing its own Act - and we are so pleased that the momentum to achieve the same for our communities is growing. Every day those working in public services—our hospitals, transport systems, schools, aged-care and youth services, our emergency services—are making administrative decisions that have significant and lasting consequences for people's lives. And yet, there is currently no requirement for any of those decision makers to even consider the impact their actions will have on people's rights. A Human Rights Act will change that - by placing an obligation on public bodies to consider the effects their policies will have on people, and by providing accessible pathways to justice for anyone whose rights have been breached.

If you would like to know more about our Human Rights Act or you are part of an organisation that would like to join the Human Rights Act for NSW Alliance, please get in touch by emailing newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Take a minute to show your support for a Human Rights Act – scan the QR code to write to your MP.



Authorised by Jenny Leong MP. Funded using parliamentary entitlements.

Jenny Leong
Jenny Leong MP
Greens Member for Newtown



Dr Louis Desdoigts (left), now a postdoc at Leiden University in the Netherlands, and Max Charles, who is completing his doctorate at the University of Sydney.
Photos: Supplied

How Sydney students fixed the focus on the James Webb Space Telescope

SPONSORED

MARK SCOTT

A pair of Sydney PhD students helped sharpen the view of humanity's most powerful space observatory – without leaving Earth. As an indelible reminder of this thrilling result, Louis Desdoigts, now a postdoctoral researcher at Leiden in the Netherlands, and his colleague Max Charles had tattoos of the instrument their work repaired inked on their arms.

This remarkable technical breakthrough saw University of Sydney researchers develop a software fix that corrected blurring in images made by NASA's multibillion-dollar James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), restoring crisp performance to one of its vital scientific instruments – all without the need for a space mission or astronaut repair.

The achievement builds on the only piece of Australian-designed hardware on the JWST – the Aperture Masking Interferometer (AMI) – created by Professor Peter Tuthill from the University of Sydney's School of Physics and the Sydney Institute for Astronomy. The AMI lets astronomers take ultra-high-resolution images of stars and exoplanets by combining light from multiple patches on the telescope's main mirror, a technique known as interferometry.

However, after JWST began operations, scientists discovered that AMI's performance was being degraded by subtle electronic distortions in its infrared camera detector. These were injecting fuzziness into recovered images – a problem reminiscent of

the predecessor to JWST, the Hubble Space Telescope's early "blurry vision" after launch, which famously required a space shuttle mission and astronaut spacewalks to correct.

Rather than designing a new lens or mounting such a costly rescue mission, PhD students Louis Desdoigts and Max Charles from Professor Tuthill's group, also working with Associate Professor Ben Pope (at Macquarie University), created a data-driven, software-only calibration system that fixed the focus from the ground.

Their system, called AMIGO (Aperture Masking Interferometry Generative Observations), uses advanced simulations and neural networks to model how the telescope's optics and electronics behave in space. By understanding an imperfection in which electrical charge bleeds over into neighbouring pixels, a process known as the brighter-fatter effect, the team developed algorithms that "de-blurred" the images and restored AMI's full sensitivity.

"Instead of sending astronauts to bolt on new parts, they managed to fix things with code," Professor Tuthill said. "It's a brilliant example of how Australian innovation can make a global impact in space science."

The fix has produced spectacular results. With AMIGO, the James Webb Space Telescope has achieved sharper-than-ever detections of faint celestial objects – including the direct imaging of a dim exoplanet and a red-brown dwarf orbiting the nearby star HD 206893, about 133 light-years from Earth.

A companion study led by Max Charles, a PhD student at Sydney, has demonstrated AMI's renewed

focus by capturing high-resolution images of a black hole jet, the volcanic surface of one of Jupiter's moons (Io), and the dusty stellar winds of WR 137 – pushing the boundaries of JWST's capabilities.

"This work brings JWST's vision into even sharper focus," Dr Desdoigts said.

"It's incredibly rewarding to see a software solution extend the telescope's scientific reach – and to know it was possible without ever leaving the lab."

Dr Desdoigts has now landed a prestigious postdoctoral research position at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Both studies have been published on the pre-print server arXiv. Dr Desdoigts' paper has been peer-reviewed and will shortly be published in the Publications of the Astronomical Society of Australia.

Associate Professor Benjamin Pope, who presented these findings at SXS Sydney in October, said the research team was keen to get the new code into the hands of researchers working on JWST as soon as possible. SSA

Declaration: The researchers declare no competing interests. Funding was received from the Australian Research Council, Big Questions Institute, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, National Research Council Canada, National Science Foundation (USA) and NASA.



Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and President Prof. Mark Scott.
Enquiries: 9351 2000
info.centre@sydney.edu.au



Cartoon by norrie mAy-welby

Every drop counts

EDITORIAL

SSH

IT can feel overwhelming, even paralysing, to look at the state of the world today. Wars rage, the planet warms, inequality grows. What can any of us really do at our small, individual level?

French farmer, writer and environmentalist Pierre Rabhi told a story that offers an answer. As a great forest burns, all the animals stand by helplessly, except for a tiny

hummingbird (colibri in French) that carries drops of water in its beak to the flames. When the others scoff, the hummingbird replies: "I'm doing my part." Every drop counts.

In this issue, our pages tell stories of people doing their part: acts of creativity and compassion that remind us how small gestures matter. In Redfern, as Alky Avramides reports in "The art of caring" (page 6), 60 artists came together at Rogue Pop-Up Gallery to raise funds for families trapped in Gaza. "A drop in the ocean of needed aid?" Avramides

writes. "Yes, but the ocean has many drops and together they do make an ocean ... To reach out to another human being ... is an act of love, of caring, of fellowship."

On our front page, Andrew Collis shares the story of Kay Lanzky, a Marrickville High student and Woolloomooloo resident, whose senior-jersey design celebrates connection and growth. Her creativity reflects the same truth as Rabhi's hummingbird: that purpose begins with care – and together, our small acts create change.

SSH

The Australian tan – the staggering truth about beauty standards

OPINION

JESSICA SHEPHERD

AS we depart October and the heat begins to surge, young people often express their excitement about attaining a bronzed tan by intentionally lying out in the sun. However, the normalisation of tanning often prevents reflection on what this beauty standard truly represents.

Research indicates that suntanning is predominantly undertaken by women. According to a 2024 study by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in the 12 months prior to the study's release, approximately one in four young women aged 15 to 24 years had participated.

These risks are supported by research into skin cancer and melanoma. According to Cancer Council NSW, two in three Australians will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, with 95 per cent of cases caused by UV radiation exposure.

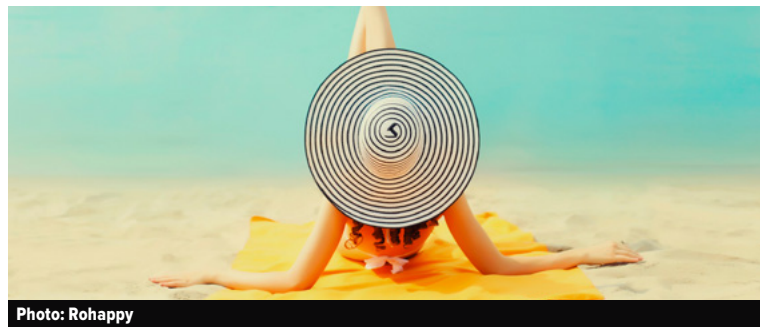


Photo: Rohappy

The deadly nature of intentional tanning, intertwined with high participation rates among women, is a by-product of broader patriarchal standards that invite the suffering of women.

A 2015 academic study found that the repetitive portrayal of famous women accompanied by a bronzed tan in the media cultivated the perception of tanning as desirable among young women.

To understand the prominence of this standard in a contemporary context, I interviewed a 16-year-old who revealed that most of the content she encountered promoting tanning was on TikTok and Instagram, prompting her to tan herself.

"I would often see thirst traps of people with noticeable tan lines. Most of the comments underneath were filled with people complimenting the creator on their tan lines."

These compliments link to a broader pattern in which what is deemed attractive in the media is often achieved through physical pain. For example, having an idealised "nose" or "body" is often obtained (outside of health reasons) by having natural features plumped or surgically reconstructed – to the point where facial expression becomes limited.

When women garner acceptance, male attention, popularity or a lack of shame



Photo: Eva Rinaldi, commons.wikimedia.org

Privilege and poetry – Taylor Swift in an unequal world

RELIGION & ETHICS

ANDREW COLLIS

TAYLOR Swift's new album, *The Life of a Showgirl* (released October 3), is both dazzling and disquieting – a confounding study in performance, power and vulnerability. It turns personal experience into vivid art while revealing the tangled conditions of its making: the "showgirl" exploited by the music industry; the artist learning, painfully, to love and be loved, to give, to work, to perform.

Tracks like "The Fate of Ophelia" and "CANCELLED!" showcase Swift's storytelling gifts. The first revisits Shakespeare's tragic heroine – melancholy, idealistic, suspended between obedience and despair. Swift's Ophelia floats in a dreamlike world, naive and brave. Yet the song also reflects privilege: Shakespearean language, the glossy production of Max Martin and Shellback. What does it say about the wider struggles of women silenced or exploited today?

"CANCELLED!" is a clever, layered response to public shaming. Friends "cloaked in Gucci and in scandal" move through a hall of mirrors where fame, guilt and resistance intermingle. The song's world – of luxury brands and curated outrage – feels far removed from the harsher realities faced by women and minorities confronting systemic violence, religious nationalism and social precarity.

These tensions give *The Life of a Showgirl* its power.

The album knows it is caught in contradiction: the showgirl as both agent and product – a performer making meaning in a culture that consumes sincerity.

There is, nonetheless, grace in the work. The showgirl becomes a figure of endurance and reinvention, of work as witness. Swift's capacity for self-reflection hints at something theological: the possibility of redemption through recognition, of artistry as confession. Her songs invite empathy even as they test its limits.

For all its ironies, *The Life of a Showgirl* gestures toward a larger conversation. "Father Figure" exposes inherited patterns of control; "Wood" satirises patriarchal values. Here Swift's writing begins to connect private experience to structural critique, showing how power and tenderness coexist uneasily in families, industries and communities.

The challenge – for Swift and her audience – is to move beyond autobiography toward something more relational and responsible. Art can reveal privilege as both burden and opportunity: a chance to listen, to share the stage, to imagine freedom not as solitary success but as mutual recognition.

In the end, Swift's album is both mirror and window: a mirror reflecting her own world of fame and feeling, and a window onto the ongoing question of what it means to make beauty in an unequal world. *The Life of a Showgirl* is sonically rich, lyrically self-aware and ethically unresolved – a reminder that art, like faith, is never finished but always becoming.

SSH

by partaking in their own dehumanisation – by altering their naturalness or placing themselves at risk – it raises the question of whether the above examples are truly products of attractiveness, a term defined by subjectivity.

When features that define our physical and natural personhood are altered, advocacy for those features represents a desire for control – an attempt to keep women insecure and limit individuality, disguised as attractiveness.

However, this piece does not call for shame among women who participate.

A desire for belonging and acceptance is humane, and it is understandable that participation in these extreme examples arises.

This is why women must work to recognise these standards for what they are – and publicly condemn these mechanisms of attainment. A short-term tan is not worth the real risk of skin cancer later in life.

SSH

The art of caring

ART
ALKY ALVRAMIDES

In a small two-storey terrace in the heart of a rambling strip of shops and bars in Redfern, across about five days in late October, early November 2025, a large group of approximately sixty artists came together as a loose collective for a brief period of time.

Brought together randomly and without artistic bias of any kind, they donated work for sale for the purpose of helping a small number of Palestinians trapped on the strip of land known as Gaza. These Gazans as well as their whole population of fellow citizens – women, men and especially children – have, for the last two years, been under the worst imaginable conditions of privation, genocide, brutalisation, displacement and starvation.

A world of women, men and even children have watched on with growing horror and frustration. What to do? How to help? These questions tug at the heart of every empathetic soul who is witness to this continuing degradation. Based on a similar model of help in other parts of the world, this show did what it could. A drop in the ocean of needed aid? Yes, but the ocean has many drops and together they do make an ocean. Was it tokenistic? Absolutely not. In the big picture this was a little sketch. A scribble of hope and help. But to reach out to another human being, despite all the limitations that enfold you both, is an act of love, of caring, of fellowship. This exhibition has been and gone now but its effects on a handful of Gazans will be important, necessary, possibly life changing. And for the artists? For the participants who attended, either personally or digitally, a lot reaching



Elizabeth Rankin, 'Little Watermelon', 2025.

into their pockets? The gesture will also remain and be important. Giving love is always receiving love.

Artists for Gaza was held at Rogue Pop-Up Gallery, 130 Regent Street,

Redfern. All works are also available to view on @artistsforgaza.au

Fright night for young writers is pure Poe-try

BOOKS
ANNA ZABOW

SKELETONS, spooky noises and poetic confessions set the scene for a gothic-themed evening for young writers at Story Factory in Parramatta.

The writers took part in an after-school program at Story Factory for eight weeks and wrote poems inspired by the work of 19th-century American writer Edgar Allan Poe. They then presented their work at a poetry murder mystery night held as part of a new literary festival, Parramatta's Lit!, and the Sydney Fringe Festival. "The interplay between poetry, gothic literature and the Parramatta community shows us the unique power that young people hold in reimagining literature in their own world," said Philip Wilcox, Special Projects Manager at Story Factory. Students wrote a manuscript in which they imagined that Poe had lived and recently died in Parramatta. They created original characters with compelling motives to kill Poe, fleshed out the story with suspicious diary entries and poetic confessions, and decided how to showcase their work to an audience.

"We had so much fun because we were actually a part of the work, not just witnessing it," said Tanya, Year 7. The students took charge of the set design, and Story Factory's Parramatta Centre was transformed with smoke machines, unsettling soundscapes, excerpts scrawled on the walls, and tables laid out with case files and cryptic riddles.



A young writer performs at the murder mystery night at Story Factory Parramatta. Photo: Natasha Capstick

"I really liked how each clue was set up as a proper exhibition," Tanya added. "When we started they were just programs and paragraphs, but then it really came together." While the students began with different ideas for the project, they were delighted with the end result. Kaarthik, Year 10, said the program allowed young

people to express their own ideas and have the opportunity to listen to others. "The Ibis" (a rendition of "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe) By Kaarthik, Year 10 Once upon an evening wondrous, as I stared into those whites so lustrous, None the more a blabber of beautiful words as leaves on bonsai -

While I merely nodded nearly napping, as her voice kept rapping As of my eyes delightfully dancing, dancing for her deceiving lullaby. "I can listen forever," I whispered, "on the river her deceiving lullaby - The ecstasy of these moments I cannot deny". O, I recall it was noon in the bright winter of June; And each ibis drew wreaths with the

grassy green dye. Eagerly I longed for another visit; hoping I would never miss it From my forgetful archives forget it - forget it with adrenaline on the high - O how I would never want to forget it with adrenaline on the high - Etched the ibises in my blue sky.

Theatre Review
by Yvonne Hocothee



Fly Girl
Writers: Genevieve Hegney and Catherine Moore
Director: Janine Watson
Ensemble Theatre, Kirribilli
17 October – 22 November, 2025

Our first intimation of the fun ahead is hinted at by orange-clad air stewardesses, urging everyone to take their seats as ‘We are about to take off’. We could be forgiven for thinking this would be an air hostess saga of sorts – it is anything but.

It is, in fact, the turbulent story of Deborah Lawrie’s unrelenting determination to become a pilot in the late 70s. It was an era in Australia when the idea of women becoming airline pilots was inconceivable, especially to Reg Ansett of Ansett Airlines, with whom Deborah eventually locks horns in her zeal to achieve her goal.

The obstacles placed in her way seem unbelievable now, in these more equal opportunity times, but were considered valid objections at the time. Equipped with a science degree and impeccable aviation qualifications, her applications are constantly turned down. Why? Some of the reasons given, she said, were ‘that women did not have the strength, they would panic, they may get married’ – all related to female physiology.

Writers Hegney and Moore were initially ‘amazed and dumbfounded’ by Deborah’s experiences but have succeeded in crafting a highly entertaining work from a very complex set of circumstances, with legal, political and personal ramifications. It sets out the serious premise of discrimination, while still delivering a fast-paced, hilarious show. Director Janine Watson, equally, has the unenviable task of guiding the five actors through creating some fifty characters and, while retaining the balance of comedy and pathos, she does so with impressive control.

The action of the play moves at a clip, with an airport-style destination board informing the audience of scene changes. Cleo Meinck, playing the young Deborah, is believable in her depiction of the struggle against Reg Ansett’s implacable belief that women could not be pilots. The rest of the cast (Genevieve Hegney, Alex Kirwan, Catherine Moore, Emma Palmer) play a multiplicity of roles – parents, judge, pilots, lawyers, Reg Ansett, and more – changing costume and character with dizzying rapidity. The gender-swaps necessitated by a small cast add to the hilarity, especially in the ‘boys’ club’ drinking scene with some failing stick-on moustaches.

Deborah never gave up. After innumerable knock-backs, she endured an eighteen-month-long legal action against Ansett and finally won the right to be employed as a commercial pilot. Her success was aided by the recently formed Equal Opportunity Commission, who deemed her case to be one of sexual discrimination and ordered Ansett to employ her. On 22 January 1980, Deborah made her first commercial flight, co-piloting on a flight from Alice Springs to Darwin.

This triumph of the underdog

against implacable odds seemed to leave the opening night audience in a highly effervescent mood. After this exhilarating theatrical ride, the excitement continued during the tumultuous curtain call when Deborah Lawrie herself stepped down from the audience to take her bow among the actors. The wild applause and standing ovation appeared to be unending – there’s no doubt Deborah’s story touched a major chord, a sense of fair play so dear to the Australian heart. This play, apart from the tremendous achievement of its stellar creative team, delivers an important message and deserves to be seen – don’t miss it!

Theatre Review
by Catherine Skipper



Naturism
Writer: Ang Collins
Director: Declan Greene
Wharf 2 Theatre, Sydney
Theatre Company
October 25 – November 15, 2025

Have we reached the point where it is permissible to make silly jokes at the expense of climate anxiety? Ang Collins thinks so, and hopefully she is right, as having a good laugh at some of the absurdities and hypocrisies of climate activism suggests the movement has come of age at last.

Straight away, the play gets down to basics. The three principals, Glenn Hazeldine, Nicholas Brown and Hannah Waterman, are introduced one by one, naked and spotlighted in vaudevillian fashion. Each draws sly attention to their defining bits, and their complete confidence in being stripped of both the protection and disguise provided by clothing immediately gains our wonder and sympathy. Most of us could not let ourselves be so vulnerable to the public’s gaze.

The three have lived for two decades in their version of an ‘eco-paradise’, off-grid and obeying the rules in their sacred book, called ‘Thingy’, and drawn up by Ray (Hazeldine). In sunglasses and sneakers, Ray looks a smooth operator and, as the apparent leader, he projects authority over his two subjects – the task- and rule-oriented Sid (Brown), and Sid’s partner, the arty-crafty, self-described ‘empath’, Helen (Waterman).

Although naked, Helen still manages to have that feminine indispensable, a handbag – in this case, handwoven – and expresses her creativity through the ridiculously elaborate hats she has made for each of them. It is apparent she is becoming dissatisfied with the isolation imposed by Ray, and when an intruder arrives from ‘the outside’ Helen is moved to little rebellions.

The intruder, who has apparently struggled through the bush in white sandals, crocheted pink shorts and bra top and a long floaty coat, is Evangeline (Camila Ponte Alvarez). A young self-described ‘eco-warrior’ and a TikTok influencer, Evangeline is seeking redemption for crimes against the environment – the use and then disposal of an air conditioner.

As the preoccupations of the Gen Xers (definitely not Baby Boomers) – growing vegies, handcrafting and listening to The Seekers – are made

fun of, Evangeline is a compendium of Gen Z’s idiosyncrasies: short attention span, mobile dependence and inability to read. When the male of the Gen Z species arrives, Adam (Fraser Morrison), self-described ‘content creator and emerging rapper,’ things really begin to unravel.

A rather hastily contrived bushfire brings the ‘eco-paradise’ to its end but not before a devastating discovery is made and a devastating secret revealed. And how does it end?

With a new Adam and a new Eve?

The highlight of what are all truly fine comic performances is Waterman’s Helen. She exudes warmth and garners sympathy as a woman tiring of the rule book created by a would-be patriarch. Her rebellions, the nibbling of magic mushrooms, provide the visual highlights of the show as she communes with talking stars, a giant bee and a female whipbird with a French accent. While funny, these interludes carry the message that listening to nature is the road back.

Naturism is a very imaginative production, and while the plotline may seem thin, the play makes its point visually. We are literally offered a glimpse through ferns and branches into a delusional little world – and the hope that it might be possible to have a larger view.

Film Reviews
by Lindsay Cohen



After The Hunt
Director: Luca Guadagnino
Starring: Julia Roberts, Ayo Edebiri, Andrew Garfield
Genre: Pretty intense women

Just because a film’s subject matter is potentially very interesting, the acting is excellent and there are intense moments, doesn’t mean the film is good. Indeed, whether a good film should also be entertaining will no doubt be a subject for discussion in a future review.

I’ll give director Luca Guadagnino (who also directed the tennis love triangle *Challengers* (2024)) credit for his attempt to cover the complex issues and detailed nature of adult teacher/student relationships. He attempted to address the complexity of defining and confirming sexual assaults, how they could or should be reported, and to what extent addressing them publicly or privately could have a positive or lasting impact on the victim and the accused, including in courts.

But unfortunately, most of *After the Hunt* is difficult to comprehend. Intense psychological and philosophical arguments, including many at an academic level, may be true and relevant to what Guadagnino is trying to cover. But that doesn’t mean they add value to the film or help to make it interesting and worth watching.

The likely target audience of intelligent, deep and meaningful adults with great interest in the complex nature of human relationships may take great interest in the film. But even they may not be able to understand what’s being discussed or argued. Add to that the incomprehensible musical and audio moments that try to

artificially create tension and a final scene set years later that seems to undermine the intent of the film, and *After the Hunt* has rationalised away its reason for being.

Rating: Two and a half unprofessors.



Twinless
Director: James Sweeney
Starring: Dylan O’Brien, Lauren Graham, Arkira Chantaratananond
Genre: Twinful

Can you truly appreciate and understand what happens in a relatively realistic, non-fantasy style film, if you have little understanding of, or no similarities to, the main characters?

Minor spoiler alert now but don’t worry – it won’t spoil the film overall! In *Twinless*, a homosexual guy from a passionate one-night stand accidentally causes his partner to die. As a result, he becomes obsessed with his partner’s very different but identical twin, and pretends he also has an identical twin that recently died so they can connect emotionally.

I really like *Twinless*. It sometimes is funny black comedy style and sometimes funny blackless comedy (you heard that here first!). Some of the action is serious, with emotional and intense family and friend relationships. Some of it is very amusing and entertaining. But could it be more relevant to me and more insightful if I shared any of the characteristics and personality elements? I also had no idea that identical twins can be very different from each other. If I knew any of this info before seeing the film, would I rate it higher as a result?

I’m not saying don’t see a film that features characters that are nothing like you or you know nothing about. In very good films like *Twinless*, the overarching actions and reactions can still capture your attention and keep you entertained. Indeed, if you do have characteristics like those in a film, that film might be of more relevance and interest to you. For example, if you’re a boxer, watch *Rocky*, and if you’re a soldier or cowboy – well then you have lots of films to watch!

Rating: Two pairs of twins, four in total.

Book Review
by Orli Jacoby



Broken Country
Clare Leslie Hall
Simon & Shuster, 2025

Broken Country is a historical fiction novel rooted in love, loss, and sacrifice.

The novel takes place primarily between 1955 and 1968 and is set in a farming village in Dorset, England. Clare Leslie Hall vividly captures this beautiful countryside atmosphere, using strong sensory imagery that transports the reader into the story. While the plot and characters were deeply intriguing,

I found myself wanting to continue reading purely because of this setting.

The novel switches between a past timeline and two present chronologies, one of which follows a murder trial that begins vaguely to captivate the reader until the very last plot twist. Though this concurrent form of storytelling can often feel confusing, Hall clearly differentiates the three plots and answers all the questions readers begin to ask themselves throughout the novel.

Hall crafts our protagonist, Beth, as a flawed but lovable character, allowing readers to sympathise with her even when she makes questionable or immoral decisions. Beth’s past timeline follows her growing up within the constraints of a patriarchal society, as she falls in love for the first time and dreams of becoming a writer.

As we continue down her life path, we see her experiences with heartbreak, relearning how to love, and finally, dealing with potent grief that is a key theme of the novel. Though I typically resent a love triangle trope, it worked well in this plot as a refreshing break from the intensity of the loss these characters experienced.

To encapsulate the 1960s, Hall references key authors and musicians from this time period, which add to the overall atmosphere of the novel.

Ultimately, I thoroughly enjoyed Hall’s writing style and the way she blends romance, thriller, and historical genres together. *Broken Country* made me weep, laugh, and smile all within a couple of chapters – a trilogy of emotions that only the strongest of writers can evoke.

Book Review
by Melinda Kearns



The Peach King
Inga Simpson
Lothian Children’s Books, 2025

Inga Simpson is an Australian novelist and nature writer whose work celebrates the natural beauty of Australia and the rhythms of Australian life. Her novel *Willowman*, for example, details a cricketer’s rise to fame and his deep connection to his bat, crafted and gifted by a local artisan.

The Peach King is a picture book that had its origins in a story told in her first novel *Mr Wigg* and is beautifully illustrated by Tannya Harricks.

The largest of the peach trees in the orchard, The Peach King, guards and protects the other trees through many seasons of growth and renewal. Little Peach Tree has only just started growing and feels the magic of the seasonal renewal of flowering and fruiting for the first time. The Peach King wards off insect plagues by summoning birds to eat the attackers, but when the drought comes, the danger of fire is imminent. The orchard is threatened by fire and Little Peach Tree comes to the rescue, but not before The Peach King has to sacrifice itself for its community.

Inga Simpson has written an engaging fable about the endurance of nature and the resilience of the Australian spirit in the face of a harsh climate.

Sharing Aboriginal culture through storytelling – walking and talking

FIRST PEOPLES
DONNA INGRAM

I'M Donna Maria Ingram, a proud Wiradjuri woman. I was born in Crown Street Women's Hospital, Surry Hills in Sydney, the eldest of five children to Kathleen Maude Hamilton and Lachlan Ingram Junior. We lived in the Redfern Waterloo area for most of our lives. I now live on Bidjigal Country, near La Perouse, but I still spend most of my time in Redfern because of my family connections, social life and work.

I have strong ties with many organisations in the local area. I've worked as the customer service coordinator at Eora College (TAFE NSW) in Chippendale, assisting the students. I've also worked at Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Women's Place, Wyanga Aboriginal Aged Care, Tribal Warrior Association and Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. Since 2021, I've been working at Murawin, an Indigenous-led consultancy.

My family on both sides lived in the inner-city area, including Redfern, Waterloo, Erskineville and Newtown. My great-grandmother Maude May Murray bought a house in Walker Street, Redfern in the 1940s. My maternal grandmother Muriel Ruth Burton lived in Redfern and married my grandfather Stephen Hamilton. My paternal grandparents are Louisa Simpson and Lachlan Ingram Senior, Wiradjuri from Cowra, NSW. They both fought for Aboriginal citizens' rights



Donna Maria Ingram. Photo: Lindsay Williams

in Sydney in 1938. I have four children and seven grandchildren who still live in the area, and I love them dearly.

In the mid-2000s, I ventured into the tourism business and established my Aboriginal walking tours called *Redfern Then and Now*. The walking tours were set up to showcase the local Redfern Aboriginal community, which includes historical, social and political activism, and to introduce our Aboriginal world through storytelling. Our local organisations, such as medical, legal, aged care, preschool and employment services, were established due to our people being excluded from mainstream services or served by people who did not understand our culture. These Aboriginal-run services have been going for over 50 years.

After several years of running my tours, I realised

how they highlighted the lack of knowledge of my people and culture in mainstream society. I've seen the gaps and the importance of sharing our knowledge to help build a more cohesive society. I would like to continue my tours and provide the history and knowledge of my culture and my people through storytelling, which is a major part of Aboriginal culture. I want to see my children and grandchildren live in a society that values them and their Aboriginal culture.

SSH

CITY OF SYDNEY South Sydney Herald

This article is part of a series by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living and working on Gadigal land. The series, a joint project of the SSH and the City of Sydney, is curated by Auntie Norma Ingram.

In everything and everywhere? The tricky case of PFAS

ENVIRONMENT
EMMANUELLE BOTTÉ

PFAS. Ten years ago, this was a cryptic acronym. Nowadays, it has become so common in our news feed that you probably know it is pronounced *P-fass*, and that it designates “forever chemicals”.

The nerdy words that PFAS stands for (per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances) tell you what they are, but if you never liked chemistry, just think of them as chemicals that do not exist naturally, yet are found in every type of environment: soil, water, air, and the human body. The problem is that they are everywhere but welcome nowhere, as they are essentially contaminants that we cannot get rid of or recycle, and because they have been linked to human cancer, decreased immunity, and developmental problems.

We have synthesised PFAS since the 1940s for the magic-like properties they confer: heat-resistant, waterproof, and anti-adhesive. Today, they are embedded in an enormous quantity of products across at least 15 categories of common goods, including cosmetics, clothing, food packaging, electronics, paints, pesticides, firefighting foam, and household chemicals.

As we wash our clothes and clean our sinks with detergent; as we eat popcorn, microwaved pizza, or an apple; as we apply lipstick or mascara; as we drink our daily coffee, we consume, often ingest, and in every case contribute to the production of PFAS, their shedding in nature, and the decline of our health.

Sydney is, of course, not immune to the PFAS curse, but we don't really know to what extent. In fact, local researchers are actively trying to assess just how many (and how much!) PFAS are in our bodies, perhaps



Pesticide use is one of the biggest issues with PFAS. Photo: Mrt Ziolk / Pexels

entering via the city's drinking water and the vegetables sold at Sydney markets, for example.

Facing this big a problem, what can we do? As you read these lines holding your PFAS-containing phone or mouse ... not much. But hopefully, identifying the source and fate of PFAS, and developing alternatives, will one day allow us to rely on them a lot less than we do now. At the individual scale, it means understanding the value of research, demanding transparency about exposure, and advocating for the protection of the most vulnerable populations and natural sites.

SSH



Photo: Joe Fenech

Out & About – November 2025

PAT CLARKE

WRN end of year celebration

November 27, 11am–2pm

Join the Women's Reconciliation Network at NCIE, 190 George St, Redfern, to celebrate the end of the year. Cost is \$40 per head, including entertainment and lunch, catered by Auntie Beryl. Donations are welcomed to help those who need financial support to attend. More info: wrnredfern.org.au

International Games Month

Friday gaming for teens, November 14, 21 and 28, 3.30-5.30pm

Green Square Library is hosting free gaming sessions for teens throughout November. Bookings via Eventbrite. Sales end on November 14.

National Recycling Week

November 10-16

Instituted by Planet Ark in 1996, this year's theme is “Making a difference where we work, live and play”. The City of Sydney sustainability team will give a talk about all aspects of recycling, including myths and mistakes, and tips to reduce and reuse. Venue: Cliff Noble Community Centre, corner Renwick and Suttor streets, Alexandria. Date: Friday November 14, 10.30am-12.30pm. This is a free event. Book by calling 02 9265 9116 or email council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

The Finders Keepers Sydney Design Market – Carriageworks

Friday November 14, 4-9pm; Saturday & Sunday November 15-16, 10am-5pm

Some of Australia's best designers and makers will be in attendance with their works for sale. Cost from \$10 for adults, children under 13 years free. There will be music, food and drink. Tickets available via Humanitix.

International Day for Tolerance

November 16

This UN observance, instituted in 1995, aims to promote tolerance among people of all backgrounds and beliefs.

Summer art blockbusters – Art Gallery of NSW and Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA)

Art Gallery of NSW

Dangerously Modern – until February 15, 2026.

Highlights the lives of 50 Australian women artists in Europe from 1890 to 1940. *Ron Mueck: Encounter* – December 6, 2025 to April 12, 2026. Australian-born Ron Mueck is internationally renowned for his lifelike sculptures of people, ranging in size from tiny to gigantic. Tickets: Adults \$35, concession \$32.

Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA)

Data Dreams: Art & AI – November 21, 2025 to April 26, 2026.

The exhibition features work by artists who examine how artificial intelligence is transforming the way we live, think and create. Tickets: Adults \$28, concession \$24, students \$20, 13-17 years free.

The Andalus Arabic Choir in concert with Ziad Rahbani – Music Beyond Boundaries

Friday November 14, 7pm – Seymour Centre. Almost sold out, with a few tickets still available at booknow.seymourcentre.com

Summer officially starts on Friday

December 1, 2025, and ends on Saturday February 28, 2026.

The summer solstice will be on Monday December 22.

Pat Clarke

SSH

volunteers@ssh.com.au

Terra Cotta Roasters – Dining

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