

the South Sydney Herald

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After joining what many consider Australia’s first modern dance company, the Bodenwieser Ballet, when she was 24, dance took Eileen Kramer around the world. She performed in Europe, New York and India – meeting Ella Fitzgerald and doing the twist with Louis Armstrong along the way. Last month Eileen chose to celebrate her 109th birthday by giving friends, relatives and admirers attending her party at the Sydney Dance Company in Dawes Point a dance lesson of sorts. Photo: Michelle Haywood

‘Donate a Plate’ so no one goes hungry this Christmas

HUMAN AFFAIRS
SSH

WAYSIDE Chapel is making an urgent plea to all Australians to support people with nowhere to go this holiday season through its “Donate a Plate” campaign amid rising homelessness and food insecurity.

Every plate purchased will go towards feeding visitors a three course Christmas meal with all the trimmings, at Wayside’s Christmas Day Street Party, along with continued support throughout the festive season.

According to the Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 more than 3.7 million households in Australia experienced moderate to severe food insecurity in the last 12 months. Alarmingly, 23 per cent of these households are sometimes skipping meals or going whole days without eating because there’s no money for food.

Wayside Chapel is seeing the cost-of-living crisis firsthand, with an expected 60 per cent increase in visitors in the run up to Christmas.



Wayside Christmas Day Street Party 2022. Photo: Michelle Haywood

Pastor and CEO of Wayside Chapel, the Rev. Jon Owen, says: “Wayside Chapel is experiencing a surge of need. As you read and hear about these dreadful statistics, we are on the frontline seeing the

people behind the numbers and hearing their complex and often heart-wrenching stories.” Demand for food at Wayside’s low-cost community cafes – from people who can’t get a hot meal any other way – almost

doubled compared to last year, to nearly 1700 meals per week. It has now reached the point where the charity has put per-person food limits on orders, to avoid running out of food before the end of the day.

Mr Owen says, “For the 35,011 people experiencing homelessness in NSW, reducing loneliness and disadvantage is more important at this time of year than ever.” “Donate a Plate” contributions will go a long way to feed and support a person experiencing homelessness and social isolation this festive season and beyond.

- \$27 will provide one meal for one person
- \$54 will feed a couple
- \$108 will feed a family of four

“We’re truly grateful to everyone who’s contributed this year. But the reality is, we still need more help to reach our goal of \$1,100,000 by the 25th of December. It’s essential to ensure that the vulnerable in our community aren’t left alone or hungry during what can be the hardest time of the year,” Mr Owen said.

Go to www.donate.waysidechapel.org.au/event/donate-a-plate-2023/home or scan the QR code below.



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JENNY LEONG MP

MEMBER FOR NEWTOWN

Climate Activists demand action, but is the Government listening?

At the tail end of the hottest year on human record, the stark reality of our climate crisis looms large. The imminent summer threatens us with extreme heat and fires, while our Pacific Island neighbors face rising sea levels and coastal communities are pummeled by flooding monsoons. The urgency of the climate crisis is no longer a specter on the horizon, it is an alarming reality we face today, and it is faced by all. Increasingly the community understands that our battles, for climate justice, First Nations justice, and workers' rights, are intertwined. An intersectional, collective movement for change – the people's movement to address the climate crisis – continues to gain momentum, yet in the face of this urgent call for action the NSW Labor Government has passed Climate laws that while an improvement on the nothing that existed before, certainly don't deliver on what is needed for urgent and meaningful change.

Leading climate scientists, legal experts, economists, activists and environmental organisations all agree that we need to go further, faster. We do not need symbolic gestures – we need action. Our laws and the actions of Government should reflect the demands of those in our communities who are mobilising on the streets (and in the ocean!), calling on us to do more.

The School Strike 4 Climate movement continues to lead the way – showing us the power of the next generation. Telling schoolchildren to stay in class did not stifle their anger at the destruction of their future; instead, it fueled their resolve. The Government must take notice of the demands of students who walked out of school, we have an imperative to listen to those most impacted by climate change – our future generations.

Over 3,000 activists organised by Rising Tide – the youngest just 15, and the oldest 97 years old (and 109 of which were disgracefully arrested by NSW Police Force officers, despite the peaceful nature of the protest) – also took to the ocean on the weekend of November 25 to blockade the world's largest coal port. This was the biggest act of peaceful, non violent civil disobedience for climate action in Australia's history, and rightly demanded urgent global climate action.

The evidence is clear, if we are to keep global heating below 2 degrees we must achieve net zero by 2035, or 2040 at the latest, not 2050 as the recently passed laws set out. We also need to stop opening any new coal and gas mines. The Greens will continue to mobilise with the growing movement for climate action on land and sea.



Authorised by Jenny Leong MP. Funded using parliamentary entitlements.



Prospective development for Waterloo South. Photo: Geoff Turnbull

Waterloo South - taking shape

LOCALS

GEOFF TURNBULL

SYDNEY University students have used the new planning controls and design guide for Waterloo South to produce a scale model of what might be built. While the final building design will differ, the size and general form of the buildings will be like that in the photo above (and those on the REDWatch Facebook page).

Meanwhile, the Department of Planning and Environment undertook a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the Explorer Street (Eveleigh) rezoning and this study gives us an insight regarding the social impacts that Waterloo is also experiencing.

The Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) developers must do a SIA for Waterloo with its first development application – which will be nine to 10 years after the project was announced. You can find out more about the SIA on the REDWatch website.

Before Christmas, LAHC expects to announce the remaining two consortiums in the competition to undertake the

Waterloo South development. Only three consortiums are left after the Frazer's consortium with Bridge Housing pulled out when the new government asked developers to increase their affordable housing contributions to 20 per cent. Waterloo tenants are to be notified before the public release of the information.

A newsletter is expected before Christmas and LAHC is holding an end-of-year event on Waterloo Green on Friday December 8 from 3pm. The Waterloo Connect Office at 95 Wellington Street (opposite OzHarvest) has reopened on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10am-4pm.

February 1, 2024, will see the start of Homes NSW from the amalgamation of Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Housing, LAHC and the Aboriginal Housing Office within the DCJ cluster. The recruitment of the Homes CEO and planning the operational structure of the new body are currently underway.

Over the holiday period, SSH will provide updates on its website.

Geoff Turnbull is the spokesperson for REDWatch.



Prince Edward, patron of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, paid a three-day visit to Sydney in late November. The visit coincides with an expansion of the Duke of Edinburgh program to young people outside schools, including those in out-of-home care and in custody. In Woolloomooloo, the prince was introduced to the Sydney PCYC's boxing program for disadvantaged youth, which targets young people who might be at risk of offending and instead offers them a chance to join the boxing community. The prince also met with award participants and their families, representatives of Corrective Services NSW as well as prison inmates taking part in the program. Photo: Michelle Haywood



Climate Emotions Workshop participants. Photo: Karina Kreminski



Image: Getty

Climate workshop focuses on hope

ENVIRONMENT

KARINA KREMINSKI

WHEN it comes to climate change, people often ask: “What can I, as an individual, do?” The answer: “Don’t be an individual.”

This is one of the nuggets of wisdom that emerged from the Climate Emotions Workshop held at the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre on November 11. Climate psychologist Dr Sally Gillespie believes that these days, when there is such distressing news about climate change and general world events, more than ever we need to gather to take action, but more importantly to share how we feel.

Dr Gillespie is a writer, workshop facilitator, lecturer and public speaker with a background in depth psychology and ecopsychology. Her book, *Climate Crisis and Consciousness: Reimagining Our World and Ourselves* (Routledge, 2020), explores the psychological experience of engaging with climate change and related ecological concerns.

The statistics tell us that many people, especially the young, are feeling a sense of doom about the future. How do we cope with the loss we are feeling about our imagined future?

In the workshop we talked through the whole gamut of emotions such as fear,

anger, apathy, grief and even disbelief. With certain animals becoming extinct and planetary warming causing more and more natural catastrophes, we will certainly have to adapt and become more resilient. So, we realised that it’s actually sane to feel anxious!

However, Dr Gillespie believes that a doom-and-gloom approach is unhelpful – instead, she focusses on hope. We need to come together and avoid atomisation and talk about how we are feeling, and then this will inspire us to take action, preferably locally.

So, what can we do? We can form small pockets of community to encourage one another. We can plant community gardens and connect with Indigenous understandings of the land. Local, practical actions give us a sense of agency, moving us away from doom towards hope.

The workshop was curated by Neighbourhood Matters in partnership with the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre.

Neighbourhood Matters works with others to facilitate community locally. We will be starting a Climate Café and an intentional Community of Hope in 2024, both in Surry Hills, as well as holding more workshops on relevant topics.

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If you or anyone you know is interested, please contact info@neighbourhoodmatters.com.au

Heading for the solar maximum

ENVIRONMENT

MICHAEL WHEATLAND

SUNSPOTS are dark patches on the Sun’s surface, locations where intense magnetic fields – thousands of times stronger than the Earth’s magnetic field – emerge from the solar interior into the Sun’s atmosphere.

Large sunspot groups may be visible with the naked eye on the solar disk if the Sun is observed through thick clouds (you should not observe the Sun with the naked eye, through clouds or otherwise) and the earliest accounts of sunspots date to almost 1,000 BCE.

However, it was only in the 19th century that a semi-regular pattern in the appearance of spots on the Sun was recognised: the solar cycle.

About every 11 years there are many more sunspots on the Sun (a “solar maximum”) and in between (“solar minimum”) the Sun can go hundreds of days without a spot appearing.

Where are we in the solar cycle? We’re approaching the maximum of Cycle 25, which should peak during 2025. (The solar cycle numbering starts with Cycle 1, which occurred in the 1760s.)

The last solar minimum was around 2019-2020. Cycle 25 is exceeding expectations, and the maximum is likely to be larger than the last cycle,

but not very unusual for the Sun.

What can we expect with solar maximum? The solar cycle would be of academic interest except that it directly affects the Earth via its influence on space weather – the conditions in our local space environment.

The magnetic fields of sunspots produce “solar activity” – dynamic events in the Sun’s atmosphere. The largest examples of activity are solar flares (enormous magnetic explosions in the Sun’s atmosphere) and coronal mass ejections or CMEs (expulsions of material from the Sun). These events produce enhanced X-ray and extreme-UV fluxes from the Sun, as well as populations of accelerated particles in the Earth’s magnetosphere.

Extreme space weather events can have damaging effects – in the past, large events have disrupted electricity grids, as well as disabling satellites. Space weather storms also produce beautiful auroral displays, down to low latitudes.

The number of flares and CMEs roughly follows the sunspot cycle, so at maximum there are many more of these events. That means there is more chance to see an auroral display, but there is also a small risk of a dangerous space weather event.

Luckily these events are quite rare – the largest event in recorded history was the Carrington event in 1859.

Should we be worried? No, all gauges on the Sun read normal.

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Uzbekistan - splendour in the sand

HUMAN AFFAIRS

LOUISA DYCE

SSH assistant editor, Louisa Dyce, recently visited Uzbekistan.

I was very fortunate to be able to visit. This is a photo I took of the Registan in Samarkand at night so I could remember its splendour. All of Samarkand is now listed as a UNESCO site. This occurred in 2001.

The word Registan means “place in the sand”. The empire of the Tumorid, famous for its distinctive architecture, made these monuments.

Within the Registan, there are three schools of learning called Madrasah.

The first school was erected by Uluchbeg, who was a mathematician and astronomer. He built the first of them from 1417 to 1420. It’s named after him as the Ulugh Beg Madrasah.

The second was built from 1619 to 1636 by the ruler Yalangtush Bakhodur. It was named the Sher-Dor Madrasah.

He also built the Tila-Kori Madrasah.

The schools covered a wide range of subjects, from the learning of the Koran to poetry, mathematics, law, languages and astronomy.

The Madrasah are all similar in design. They have a large courtyard with rooms all around the perimeter. This is where the student learned, ate and slept.

Each Madrasah is decorated separately in its own style and covered predominately in blue but also other brightly coloured glazed mosaics, which took my breath away.

The one in the middle with the blue dome also has a mosque.

Then and today the massive square is used. Then, you would have seen market stalls, celebrations, the marshalling of troops and orders by the ruler. Today, we were happy to see wedding photos being taken



The Registan in Samarkand. Photo: Louisa Dyce

and learned that performances of musicians, singers and dancers regularly take place.

All of this was nearly lost through the attrition of age, weather, earthquake, and the rise and fall of the city’s wealth and popularity.

Thankfully, the United Soviet Socialist Republic saved these gems of historical buildings and finished them just before the fall of the union.

Would I visit again? Yes, most certainly. The people of Uzbekistan are polite, friendly and helpful.

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TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

COST OF LIVING RELIEF

The Albanese Government understands Australians are under pressure from the costs of living.

We have a \$23 billion ten-point plan to take some of the pressure off, including:

- Electricity bill relief
- Cheaper child care
- Increased rent assistance
- More Medicare bulk billing
- Cheaper medicines
- Boosting income support payments
- Fee-free TAFE training
- Building more affordable homes
- Expanding paid parental leave and
- Creating jobs and getting wages moving again

We've done all this at the same time as delivering the first budget surplus in 15 years, seeing wages grow the fastest in years while generating over 624,000 jobs since coming to office. It's a record for a new government.

Please scan the QR code for a Cost of Living Kit which has lots of tips for making your dollars go further.



You can also collect a printed copy from my office.

SEASONS GREETINGS

As Christmas approaches I want to thank you for your continued support.

All the very best to you and yours for a wonderful 2024.

Tanya

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

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Delayed cord clamping could halve risk of death in premature babies

SPONSORED

MARK SCOTT

WAITING for two minutes or longer to clamp the umbilical cord of a premature baby soon after birth could help reduce the risk of death, compared with immediately clamping the umbilical cord, or waiting a shorter time before doing so. Delaying clamping could decrease the child's risk of death by more than half relative to immediate clamping.

The new findings, published last month in two companion papers in *The Lancet*, examined clinical trial data and outcomes of thousands of premature babies which had delayed cord clamping compared to those whose cord was clamped immediately after birth.

Delaying clamping of the umbilical cord allows blood to flow from the placenta to the baby while the baby's lungs fill with air. This is thought to help ease the transition to breathing in the infant.

"Worldwide, almost 13 million babies are born prematurely each year and, sadly, close to 1 million die shortly after birth. Our new findings are the best evidence to date that waiting to clamp the umbilical cord can help save the lives of some premature babies," says first author Dr Anna Lene Seidler at the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre, University of Sydney.

"We are already working with international guideline developers to make sure these results are reflected in updated guidelines and clinical practice in the near future."

Delayed cord clamping is now recommended routine practice for babies born at full term.

However, while previous research, including trials led by University of Sydney, showed potential benefit for premature babies, best practice for this vulnerable group remained uncertain. Until recently, clinicians generally cut the cord of preterm babies immediately so urgent medical care could be given.

These uncertainties have led to different recommendations in national and international guidelines.

For instance, for preterm infants not requiring resuscitation at birth, the Australian and New Zealand Committee on Resuscitation (ANZCOR) suggest delaying cord clamping for at least 30 seconds.

The World Health Organization and the UK's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommend delayed umbilical cord clamping (not earlier than 1 minute after birth) for improved maternal and infant health and nutrition outcomes.

For preterm babies requiring resuscitation, the WHO



Two University of Sydney-led studies have given further weight to the benefits of delayed cord clamping, finding waiting for at least two minutes to clamp the umbilical cord of premature babies at birth could decrease the child's risk of death. Photo: Adobe Stock

recommends immediate clamping, while ANZCOR make no recommendation due to insufficient evidence.

"Our new findings are the best evidence to date that waiting to clamp the umbilical cord can help save the lives of some premature babies", says Dr Anna Lene Seidler.

Largest delayed cord clamping dataset to date

The studies were the result of a massive global effort (the iCOMP collaboration) among more than 100 international researchers on umbilical cord management, who shared their original data with Dr Seidler and her team for analysis, including the large APTS trial led out of the University of Sydney.

This created one of the largest databases in this research field, with over 60 studies and including more than 9,000 babies.

The first paper using data from 3,292 infants across 20 studies found delayed clamping of the umbilical cord, clamped 30 seconds or more after birth, likely reduced the risk of death in premature babies compared to those whose umbilical cord was clamped immediately after birth.

In a subgroup of premature babies where infants were born before 32 weeks of pregnancy, 44.9 per cent of the babies with immediate cord clamping experienced hypothermia after birth, compared to 51.2 per cent of those with delayed clamping. The average difference in temperature between the deferred clamping group and the immediate clamping group was -0.13°C.

"Our findings highlight that particular care should be taken to keep premature babies warm when deferring umbilical cord clamping. This could be done by drying and wrapping the baby with the cord intact, and then by placing the dry baby directly on the mother's bare chest under a blanket, or using bedside warming trolleys," says Professor Lisa Askie, senior author of the study from the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre.

The second paper analysed data from 47 clinical trials, which involved 6,094 babies, and found waiting at least two minutes before clamping the cord of a premature baby may

reduce the risk of death compared with waiting less time to clamp the cord.

In comparing different timings, waiting two or more minutes to clamp the cord had a 91 per cent probability of being the best treatment to prevent death shortly after birth.

Immediate clamping had a very low (<1 per cent) probability of being the best treatment for preventing death.

"Until recently, it was standard practice to clamp the umbilical cord immediately after birth for premature babies so they could be dried, wrapped, and if necessary, resuscitated with ease," says Dr Sol Libesman, lead statistician for this study and research fellow at the NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre.

"Our study shows that there is no longer a case for immediate clamping and, instead, presently available evidence suggests that deferring cord clamping for at least two minutes is likely the best cord management strategy to reduce the risk of premature babies dying shortly after birth."

However, the researchers highlight situations where more research is needed on cord clamping. This includes when there are babies requiring immediate resuscitation, unless the hospital is able to provide safe initial breathing help with the cord intact, or in a low-income setting with limited medical resources.

"We need further research into how to best provide immediate care to the sickest premature babies while the cord is intact. Even for healthier premature babies, it may seem counter-intuitive to some doctors to defer cord clamping when the baby requires care, but with appropriate training and equipment, along with a full team approach involving midwives, doctors and parents, it is possible to successfully defer cord clamping while ensuring the baby is warm, breathing, and cared for," says Dr Seidler.

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Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and President Prof. Mark Scott.

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Malo, South Sydney!

EDITORIAL

AKOSITA TANGI

DO you want to learn my Tongan language?
1. *Malo e lelei* = Hello.
2. *Malo* = Thank you.
3. *Malo ‘aupito* = Thank you very much.

Malo e lelei, my name is Akosita Tangi, a student minister of the Uniting Church from the Centre for Ministry at North Parramatta where I live and study on the land of the Burramattagal of the Dharug nation.

It has been an outstanding opportunity to complete my field placement in South Sydney this year. I’ve been serving with South Sydney Uniting Church in Waterloo, a welcoming and inclusive church, under the guidance of the Rev. Andrew Collis. *Malo, Faifekau* (Minister). I can boldly say that I am

blessed to have witnessed this congregation’s open heartedness. Members of the congregation, community and garden have walked alongside me, making my time so memorable, so real and so fun.

One Sunday, early in my placement, I mentioned to musician and artist Norrie that I’d always wanted to play guitar. The very next week Norrie presented me with a baritone ukulele and week after week has helped me to play. *Malo ‘aupito*, Norrie.

I’ve had the chance to do new things and to taste new things too, like lentil soup, haha yum!

As we are in the Advent season, may we walk humbly in *amanaki* (hope), *melino* (peace), *fiefia* (joy), *‘ofa* (love).

Let us always be mindful of those who are hurting, lost, abandoned and alone. May we offer them hope through the birth of Jesus Christ.

Malo ‘aupito!

SSH



Aunty Joyce Wymarra in Glebe. Photo: Larissa Minniecon

A Torres Strait Islander Elder shares her story

FIRST PEOPLES

JOYCE WYMARRA

I’M Aunty Joyce Wymarra from Badu, one of the western islands of the Torres Strait.

I was born on Badu Island and lived there until I was 11 years old. We did a lot of fishing and gardening of sweet potatoes, cassava and coconuts. We also dug for pippies, oysters and cockle shells. We got the shells to make necklaces and wove the coconut shells and leaves and reeds to make hats and grass skirts, fans and mats. We wore the skirts and sat on the mats when we did our dancing, singing and ceremonies.

I still speak my western island language fluently. Language is the main part of our culture and it is so important for us to keep speaking our language.

As young children we sat with our grandmothers and watched how they made these things. We were then able to make things ourselves. We didn’t always get it right at first but we kept trying and learning with our grandparents.

We were able to put our designs on the mats but they had to be

designs with traditional meaning. Now we can put special colours. With our dances we always have a drum and shakers.

We have different languages in the Torres Strait Island and some different dialects. There are only 18 letters in our alphabet. I couldn’t speak English until I went to Thursday Island coloured school. We were punished if we spoke our language. Our people were separated and had curfews on the islands. My husband and I moved to Sydney in 1973 with our four children. We lived in the western suburbs and then moved to Woolloomooloo where we had two more children. My children went to Plunkett Street Primary School.

We still have our Torres Strait Islander culture in Sydney. The men blow the bull shell to bring the people together for ceremonies and meetings. When our people pass away, the people sit for days to mourn their passing. The family is looked after and fed by the in-laws. After five years we put a headstone and then we do the unveiling to complete the mourning period.

Today I live in Glebe. I believe that our Torres Strait Islander culture is important in the



Cartoon: norrie mAy-welby

Faith leaders call for no new coal or gas and urgent action on climate

FAITH

SSH

SENIOR leaders from Christian, Muslim and Buddhist faiths visited key Ministers and MPs in Canberra on November 16 to urge the federal Labor government to put an end to all new fossil fuel projects in Australia, and to listen to the voices of Pacific Island nations calling for Australia to phase out fossil fuels.

The faith leaders met with Climate Minister Chris Bowen, Shadow Climate Minister Ted O’Brien, an advisor to Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and ACT Senator David Pocock. They also stood in solidarity with former diplomat Gregory Andrews, who was observing a hunger strike on the Parliament House lawns to call on the government to take stronger action on climate.

This advocacy mission followed an open letter that more than 100 senior religious leaders from across Australia and the Pacific sent to Prime Minister Albanese last year calling an end to new coal and gas projects. Only one religious leader who signed received a reply.

The faith leaders raised their concerns just days after the government announced plans at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders’ Meeting to take Tuvalu’s climate refugees as migrants in Australia while at the same time not committing to calls from some Pacific governments for a fossil fuel phase-out.

The leaders are concerned that the final text of the Communique from the Forum referred to “aspiring” to phase out fossil fuels rather than “committing” to it, that it excluded emissions from exports, and there was no timeline stated.

Uniting Church NSW.ACT Moderator, the Rev. Faaimata (Mata) Havea Hiliau, said: “... this is now a full-blown crisis, we have no time left to lose – we stand here today united as people of faith, we need the same from our nation’s political leaders.

“As a faith leader, and a daughter of the Pacific, I know what’s at stake if we don’t address this climate crisis and its unfolding impacts – people’s homes are literally being swept into the ocean.

“We need to be absolutely clear – we must rule out all new fossil fuel developments and we need to address the damage being done by our fossil fuel exports,” Ms Hiliau said.

Their message for Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek is that they want her to make protecting the climate one of the objectives of the Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation (EPBC) Act, the main piece of national environmental legislation. The Minister is reviewing that Act and it is not clear if climate impacts will be a criteria for approving projects.

“It is simply not moral for our environmental laws not to mention the climate,” said Vice President of the Islamic Council of Victoria, Mohamed

Mohideen OAM. “We need real and meaningful action from the government, urgently. We need to stop digging up new fossil fuel reserves which, in all good conscience, we know should not be exported and that scientists tell us we can never burn without real harm to life on Earth.”

They told Climate Minister Chris Bowen that his ambition needs to include emissions from exports.

“This government has made a good start on reducing our domestic use of coal and gas. However, scientists have made clear that to stay below 1.5°C of warming there can be no new fossil fuel projects. To date there is no plan to address the effect of the coal and gas we dig up and send overseas. It is not enough to simply say that these emissions are counted against the targets of the countries where they are burned. The consequences are the same as if they were burned here in Australia. The moral equation is the same,” Gawaine Powell Davies, President of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils, said.

“We all declare solidarity with the Pasifika communities who are well and truly on the frontlines of this unfolding climate crisis, as well as with our Australian communities who have endured the Black Summer bushfires, followed by three years of extreme floods, only to be facing the prospect of bushfires again this summer,” Uniting Church President, the Rev. Sharon Hollis, said.

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inner city. Our culture, along with the Aboriginal culture, is taught in our local school. Sometimes I get invited to the schools and talk about our culture to the children. We speak

western and eastern Torres Strait Islander languages. We still do the dances and songs in our important dresses. We are able to explain about the stories, songs and dances.

CITY OF SYDNEY

South Sydney Herald
This is part of a series of articles by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living and working on Gadigal land. The series, a joint project of the SSH and the City of Sydney, is curated by Aunty Norma Ingram.

In my own words

BOOKS

ISAIAH SOARES

MY name is Isaiah Soares
and I am a writer.

I grew up all over Sydney, from Redfern to Liverpool. I've always used writing to check in on myself and the world around me. Writing is not only a way of creative expression but a tool to navigate life as it passes.

Story Factory has been a consistent part of my life since I attended my very first writing workshop there when I was 16, and I couldn't be more grateful. To be in a space where I am free to be myself and explore my creative limits is such a refreshing experience that I came back for a second year and published another book, *Visage*. It's a story about a young woman who returns to her hometown and is flooded with memories and images of a self that doesn't exist anymore.

I am 19 now, studying criminology at the University of NSW and also working on creative projects in my free time. I am delving headfirst into poetry so if you're ever at

the Bankstown Poetry Slam you might just hear my newest stuff.

Excerpt from *Visage* by Isaiah Soares

She can't get the sound out of her head. She hears the voice on repeat. The words, following each other with such nurtured horror. She feels like she hasn't blinked since she left. She's afraid of giving an image to what she heard. She has to strangle the steering wheel just to stop the shaking.

What did he mean?

She takes the next exit and flips her headlights off. The sun peers over the horizon behind her and a raw sky spills through the bush.

Google maps hasn't been working the majority of the drive, and she instead is relying on a dodgy sense of direction to head somewhat inland.

It's a while before she passes the first batch of houses. She can't tell if nostalgia clouds her memory or if the place has always been a dump. Each roof has its own type of cave-in, and every window she can make out has been shattered. Even the better-off houses with the wrap-around porches on the distant hills have aged with the same grace of the flat-roofed



Isaiah Soares at Story Factory Redfern centre, with his books *Frost Bite* and *Visage*. Photo: Audrey Svoboda

tin sheds she grew up around.

She winds down her window for another smoke; the smell of forgotten asphalt and gum leaves that she lost in the city, so close to the coast. The road swerves into the main street. She remembered the houses being further spread apart. Now they looked back-to-back, as if they stretched into each other.

The porches and front steps formed faces that seemed to frown at her as she passed by, blistered and pale.

Nothing here is familiar yet it's unshakeable.

She is home.

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Story Factory is a not-for-profit creative writing organisation for young people, with centres in Redfern and Parramatta.

You can purchase Isaiah's book, *Visage* here: www.shop.storyfactory.org.au/products/visage-by-isaiah-t-soares



Fair to fund workshop teachers

ART

ANDREW COLLIS

WATERLOO: The inaugural Orchard Gallery Spring Fair was held at South Sydney Uniting Church (SSUC) on November 25.

The event was a fundraiser for the Orchard Gallery, which hosts regular exhibitions, as well as art workshops on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month.

Aunty Norma Ingram offered an Acknowledgement of Country, encouraging community members toward deeper respect and care for Gadigal land.

The Spring Fair included a barbecue in the garden (thanks Regina, John, Ron, Naomi and Akosita), a clay workshop (thanks Catherine), then silent art auction (thanks Anna and Norrie), poetry book launch and musical performances by I Cantarini and Boy Torch.

The Wordplay poetry group meets in the church hall on the

first Saturday of the month. Members read poems from the group's 2023 anthology entitled *Promptings* (published by Finnegan Press).

Catherine Skipper, co-convenor of the arts working group at SSUC, shared a poem called "the pattern maker": "folded selvage to selvage / the china white fabrics lie / expectant // she shakes out the shifty satin / the more compliant tulle / and spreads them on her bench // feels the thinness of the straps / on the girl's bare shoulders / sees pin tucks across the bodice // hears the frou-frouing / of layered skirts as they eddy / around the floor // her big gold scissors flash / the pattern flowing as she dreams / the girl's half-hidden smile // when she first sees the dress / hesitant to know herself / so beautiful."

I Cantarini is a Sydney-based group of madrigal singers. Fairgoers were treated to 16th- and 17th-century compositions, gorgeous harmonies – voices and theorbo, a 14-stringed guitar plucked like a lute or harp.

Boy Torch – Joe Fenech (vocals) and Edmond Kairouz (guitar) – played a cracking selection of original



Boy Torch at the Orchard Gallery Spring Fair on November 25. Photo: Andrew Collis

country and bluegrass tunes.

Co-convenor Carolyn May Miller helped stock the arts and crafts stall. "The day was a big success," she said. "I'm so grateful to all the artists who donated works for the auction – and auctioneer Anna Jahjah did a superb job!"

Ms Miller also paid tribute to fair organisers Jason Naylor and Emma Newton, Miriam Pepper, Louisa Dyce and John Abdul.

"Our art teachers are wonderful people," she added. "The workshops are different every month – with lessons in watercolour, collage,

ceramics and more. I'm thrilled we were able to raise \$3,000 to cover the cost of workshops in 2024."

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For more information contact Carolyn: editor@ssh.com.au

Theatre Review
by Catherine Skipper



The Master and Margarita
Adaption: Eamon Flack
Director: Eamon Flack
Belvoir Street Theatre
November 11 – December 10, 2023

The enthusiastic opening night audience gave a standing ovation to Eamon Flack’s ambitious and magical adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov’s complex and layered novel *The Master and Margarita*. What is the connection between a novel written during the Stalinist regime and only published as a complete book in 1967 and a contemporary audience whose freedom of expression seems unrestricted by comparison?

Flack draws a parallel between the virus of Stalinism and the Covid pandemic which produced an environment of fear and powerlessness in a society that believed itself comfortably immune to widescale infection – and particularly the entertainment industry – but maybe that time is behind us. Perhaps a time for rejoicing at newfound vitality fully expressed through the supremely entertaining visual staging, the often outrageously comical interaction between characters and the staggering courage of the actor’s revelatory performances. But maybe we respond at a deep level to the still very relevant questions posed by the triple narrative.

The vigorous narrator/participant (Matilda Ridgeway), who helpfully reads from the actual text, bridges the gap between the chronologically distant story lines, the interrogation of a soulfully honest Yeshua of Nazareth (Mark Winter) by a conflicted Pontius Pilate (an excellent Marco Chiappi) and a visit by a convincingly confident Devil (Paula Arundell) – in the guise of a “foreign” Professor Woland – and her weird entourage to 1930s Moscow. What has the Devil come for? Is it simply to expose the still bourgeois ambitions of the new literary elite or mock the money-minded vanity of the Muscovites through staging a dynamic Variety Show with magic tricks and pertinent illusions? Even poor Marx knew that any political system would work if people were different.

Into this mix is a third narrative thread, that of a despairing novelist whose work is rejected by the regime. Entitled “The Master” (also, Winter) by his lover, the initially submissive and already married Margarita (Anna Samson) meet on a spring day amid a downpour of yellow flowers, and helpless to combat the force of love they meet clandestinely in the Master’s basement. He writes, she worships him. When he disappears

– spirited away to a strangely quite pleasant psychiatric institution – Margarita has no knowledge of his whereabouts. And the Devil’s opportunity has come. And what she has in mind is quite a radical remodelling of the Faustian deal. You will be surprised and hopefully perplexed enough to think about the inseparability of good and evil.

While the crazy antics of the Devil’s entourage – the big bad black cat (Josh Price), the slimy Azezello (Gareth Davies), the sly Korovye (Amber McMahon) – supplied the driving energy of the performance, quieter moments command deep attention. Chiappi as Pilate gives a memorable performance of a man who might never find rest again, and Yeshua’s critique of Matthew Levi’s (Tom Conroy, also endearing as rejected poet Ivan) muddled recording of his words is sweetly ingenuous. Jana Zvedeniuk as Yelena, Bulgakov’s wife, touches a tender spot as the woman who preserved and protected Bulgakov’s manuscript and Samson astonishes with her portrayal of female power and sexuality.

The stage setting is magical, and the talented crew of creatives have created some truly impressive special effects which you must see to appreciate.

Film Review
by Lindsay Cohen



Napoleon
Director: Ridley Scott
Starring: Joaquin Phoenix, Vanessa Kirby, Tahar Rahim
Genre: Still maximum

The 2023 *Napoleon* film is truly an epic. It has awesome battle scenes and historical sequences. Indeed all 180 films featuring Napoleon Bonaparte since 1897 no doubt have epic elements. It also doesn’t matter that the current Napoleon film is ‘only’ 2½ hours long compared to the 3½ hours of *Killers of the Flower Moon* which was not an epic at all, just a long story as I noted in my last review.

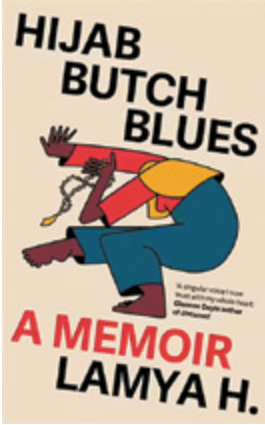
Anyway, this review is not so much about Napoleon as it is about IMAX Sydney where I viewed the film. IMAX Sydney closed in 2016 and just reopened. At the time it was the largest cinema screen in the world at 32m x 30m. The new screen is smaller. At 29m x 24m it’s ‘only’ the third largest in the world. It’s also not as curved as the original screen and the cinema itself is smaller. However, it’s perfect for a truly epic film such as *Napoleon* as the overwhelming imagery and sound comes across as if you were attending a true landscape being ripped apart by cannon balls and dying men and horses.

While not a criticism, being an epic film on an epic screen means that the non-epic elements come across as even more minor distractions. Sure, Napoleon Bonaparte’s on and off relationship with his wife Josephine may have played a role in his internal and external wars and power struggles, but the on-screen portrayal of the relationship just gets in the way of depicting the extraordinary role that Napoleon played in France’s history.

Unlike the old IMAX, the new screen and its context feels less different than any other big screen. But when it comes to a film like *Napoleon*, it’s worth the expense as it makes for a truly extraordinary event.

Rating: Four stories tall

Book Review
by Melinda Kearns



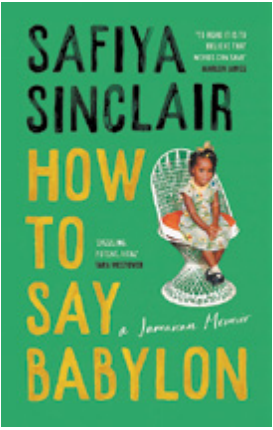
Hijab Butch Blues: A Memoir
Lamya H.
Icon Books, London, 2023

It is clear that Lamya’s Muslim faith is at the core of her developing identity in this thought-provoking memoir. Throughout her developing sense of difference from those around her, she looks to the prophets and visionaries of her faith to guide and inspire her, finding an alternative path to self-acceptance and community.

Her deepening study of the Koran when she is a teenager is the beginning of a new understanding of God’s role in her life, as she considers the suffering of Maryam in childbirth in a fresh light, framing the whole memoir through not a sense of certainty, but one of questioning. Lamya, born in South-East Asia, immigrates with her family to an unnamed Middle Eastern country when she is very young, and finds this to be the beginning of a life of displacement and exclusion. Her family don’t speak the language, they are not of the dominant racial background and their relative poverty marks Lamya as being of a different class than her rich classmates. She is highly intelligent and a good student, and later applies for a scholarship to study at an exclusive college in America and eventually settles in New York, embracing her queerness with her “chosen family” of other questioning people of faith.

The memoir as a whole conveys the value and emphasis that she places on introspection and reflection and the contemplation of who she is and what is truly important in relation to her faith and her society. The memoir is a fascinating portrayal of the significance of faith and questioning at the centre of spiritual life and how it can transform an individual’s experience of the world.

Book Review
by Catherine DeMayo



How to Say Babylon:
a Jamaican Memoir
Safiya Sinclair

Safiya Sinclair’s memoir is both breathtakingly beautiful and intensely painful to read. Sinclair, who made a name for herself as a poet before she became a memoirist, grew up in Rastafarian family in Jamaica. As my extremely sketchy knowledge of Rastafarianism was gleaned from the odd Bob Marley song, I found her description of the movement fascinating.

Believing Hailie Salassie, the former emperor of Ethiopia, to be God incarnated (despite his protestations to the contrary) Rastafarians (both Sinclair’s parents were Rastafarians) see in their own persecution an echo of the Jewish exile in Babylon. The evils of broader society are widely condemned as belonging to Babylon, and the Rastafari avoid dairy, meat, tobacco and alcohol.

Citing Leviticus 19:27, they refuse to cut their hair; their distinctive dreadlocks often mark them out for discrimination. As a child, Sinclair recalls not only her fellow students but teachers at her school singling her out for bullying and ridicule.

Painful though that was, her life is made increasingly unbearable by her father and his growing paranoia, authoritarianism and violence. Howard Sinclair, a musician, finds himself cheated

out of a recording contract and increasingly embittered. His religious zeal combines with his personal bitterness to render him more and more controlling of Safiya, her two sisters, her brother and their mother. The atmosphere in their succession of increasingly shabby homes becomes more strained, more claustrophobic and more threatening. Howard Sinclair, once an idealist who dreamed big, becomes a ticking time bomb.

Sinclair describes her father as “god of our whole dominion, who slept with one watchful eye on my purity and one hand on his black machete, ready to chop down Babylon, if it ever came close”.

Yet Sinclair has allies in her struggle against her father’s domination. Howard Sinclair narrows his family’s world with his increasingly stern restrictions but remains proud of his children’s intelligence and academic achievements. In her tremendously wide reading, Safiya finds writers – poets particularly, from Emily Dickinson to Sylvia Plath – who give voice to thoughts and emotions to which she can relate. She becomes a published poet while still in her teens.

Her other allies are the rest of her family – her mother, brother and two sisters also struggle to hold fast to dreams that run counter to Howard Sinclair’s world view.

Despite its often harrowing subject matter – and there are frank descriptions of emotional and physical abuse – *How to Say Babylon* is a beautifully written book about human resilience and potential in the face of seemingly impossible obstacles. It is also a paean to the author’s early years, when her family lived near the ocean and her father’s religious dogmatism hadn’t yet reached disturbing levels:

“The sea was the first home I knew. Out here I spent my early childhood in a wild state of happiness, stretched out under the almond trees fed by brine ... my toes dipped in the sea’s milky lapping ...”

Sponsored by Blak Douglas – Archibald Winner 2022



EXHIBITION DECEMBER 9, 3PM

Drawings on A4 paper (minimum weight 300gsm) using black and/or blue and/or red biro. The work should comment on a social or environmental issue pertaining to summer.

Blak & Blu 2023 judge Kim Leutwyler creates paintings of LGBTQ+ identified and allied people. Her work explores the concepts of glorification, objectification and modification. Throughout the work she pushes and pulls the boundary between realism and abstraction, highlighting the layers and complexity of identity, gender and beauty.

There will be a \$1,000 prize, a Junior prize (thanks to Art on King, Newtown), a People’s Choice prize, as well as formal commendations and opportunity to have work included in an exhibition at the Orchard Gallery (56a Raglan St, Waterloo) at 3pm on DECEMBER 9.

For more information contact Andrew: sshandrew@bigpond.com



Photo: Getty

Australia wins ODI World Cup

SPORT

STEVE TURNER

A Travis Head-inspired Australia has shocked India to win a sixth Cricket ODI World Cup title by six wickets in front of around 125,000 stunned fans at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

India had been undefeated throughout the tournament but were bowled out for 240 on the final ball of their innings before Head starred for Australia on his way to a match-winning 137 – after Australia had been reduced to 3/47 in front of an increasingly frenzied home crowd.

Head, with able support from Marnus Labuschagne (58), steadied the ship to lead Australia to victory despite falling with just two runs required. He became the third Australian to make a century in a men's World Cup final, joining Ricky Ponting (2003) and Adam Gilchrist (2007) in doing so.

The opener, who was also player of the match in Australia's semi-final win

over South Africa and in the World Test Championship final at the Oval earlier in the year, had earlier taken a difficult diving catch to remove dangerous India captain Rohit Sharma for 47 off 31 deliveries, just as he threatened to take the match away from Australia early.

Italy wins Davis Cup

Inspired Italian Jannik Sinner recently completed a perfect week by sealing his country's first Davis Cup title for nearly 50 years, thrashing Australia's Alex De Minaur to complete a 2-0 victory for the Azzurri.

Italy's number one Sinner produced a devastating display to outclass De Minaur 6-3 6-0 after Matteo Arnaldi outlasted Alexei Popyrin in the first singles clash.

Sinner, the world number four, ended the week with five wins out of five, including a heroic performance in Saturday's semi-final when he beat Novak Djokovic to keep his country alive against Serbia after saving three consecutive match points.

Hitting the ball with relentless power from the baseline, the Italian dominated from the moment he broke serve early in the first set and there was nothing De Minaur could do.

Sinner's purple patch lasted until he claimed the winning point on his third match point, sparking celebrations amongst teammates, officials and a noisy Italian contingent inside the Malaga arena.

SSH

Volunteers' News

PAT CLARKE

Martin Place Christmas tree and fairy lights until January 1

The City of Sydney is again showcasing the lights at Martin Place, with the tallest Christmas tree in NSW. It will feature a massive 110,000 LED lights, a colour-changing star and 330 specially created Christmas baubles. What a wonderful treat for the whole family, on display until January 1, 2024. Other lights to see in the City are at Darling Square, The Rocks, Darling Harbour and the QVB.

Blak Markets at the Rocks – December 16 and 27, 10am-4pm at Tallawoladah Place, Museum of Contemporary Art Forecourt

Hosted by The Rocks, there will be 20 unique Indigenous stalls, Welcome to Country, dance and craft and weaving workshops. Full program can be found at www.blakmarkets.com.au

Museum of Contemporary Art Summer Blockbuster – Tacita Dean from December 8

Tacita Dean is a British conceptual artist who works mainly in film. This exhibition also includes monumental chalkboard drawings and photographic and print series. Tickets are Adults \$25, Concession \$18 and Youth Children and MCA members free. For further information www.mca.com.au

Sydney Festival – January 5-28

Another almost month-long feast of theatre, music, dance, circus – whatever your favourite entertainment, you'll find it there. Some free events, such as Living Sculpture: How the Birds got their Colours from January 10-14 will be at various venues including Royal Botanic



Photo: Getty

Gardens, Tumbalong Park and Bondi Beach. And for those who want to spoil themselves, Festival Feasts at acclaimed Sydney restaurants is back on the menu. See www.sydneyfestival.org.au

The Vigil: The Future – January 25, Barangaroo Reserve, 8.30pm

This is a free event and no registration is required. Also available to watch online. www.sydneyfestival.org.au/events/vigil-awaken#fulldetails

NSW Summer School Holidays

Holidays start Wednesday December 20, until Wednesday January 31.

Thank you to our volunteers for 2023

Thank you to *South Sydney Herald's* amazing and talented volunteers 2023. And once again our appreciation goes to Marjorie Lewis-Jones for all the years of her guidance and talent. Thank you also to the Rev. Andrew Collis who is at the helm as managing editor for this issue. We look forward to seeing you all in 2024.

Also, our best wishes to our regular contributors, advertisers, readers and friends. Best wishes for the festive season and the holidays. Take care in the summer heat, keep safe and heartfelt thoughts for peace in the world, not just the Middle East, but everywhere war is raging.

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Pat Clarke
volunteers@ssh.com.au

Le Petit Tarte Café

At Le Petit Tarte Café, we take pride in our super friendly service that goes beyond just a smile. We are here to make your experience special, always willing to ensure your visit is nothing short of delightful.

Whether you're a regular seeking a familiar face or a newcomer exploring our café, we're dedicated to making you feel right at home.

Sydney's best green juice
Wide selection of fresh veg & salad
Delicious vegan brownies



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Glebe NSW 2037

OPENING HOURS
6:30am – 7pm
(Closed Christmas Day)

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