

2010 AUCKLAND WRITERS & READERS FESTIVAL

12 - 16 MAY | AOTEA CENTRE, THE EDGE® | WWW.WRITERSFESTIVAL.CO.NZ

AUCKLAND
WRITERS
& READERS
FESTIVAL

LIFE WELL READ

PRESS RELEASE: IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stephanie Johnson and Peter Wells will look on proudly as the Auckland Writers & Readers Festival they founded in 1999 celebrates its tenth birthday in May. Since 1999, this major Auckland City event will have put over 700 local writers and more than 160 international guests in front of over 100,000 people.

The focus at this year's festival is on lives – the well-lived, the well-read, the rich, the tragic, the ordinary and the extraordinary, the quiet and the chaotic, the writer's life, a life of books, living in times of war or political change, life in India, Iraq and Israel, the life of the art world, life-changing moments and decisions, the ordinary lives of extraordinary and memorable characters, the life of our national sport, the life of the outsider, the rebel and sometimes people who'd rather not be noticed at all. It's about the stories we hope will live on (whatever the format), stories that deserve a life of their own, and the people who strive to give them life. "This is what a festival is all about – the enrichment of lives through a celebration of art" says Artistic Director Jill Rawnsley.

2010 Authors Announced

International guests confirmed for 2010 include: acclaimed biographer of William Golding, John Carey; renowned travel writer William Dalrymple; *Granta* Editor John Freeman; legendary rare books dealer Rick Gekoski; *Eat, Pray, Love* author Elizabeth Gilbert; controversial author of *My Israel Question* Antony Loewenstein; *The Monthly* Editor Ben Neparstek; journalist and author of *Erasing Iraq* Michael Otterman; sociologist and author of *Seven Days in the Art World*, Sarah Thornton; and *Economist* management editor and Schumpeter columnist Adrian Wooldridge. Fiction writers confirmed to attend are Jill Dawson, Thomas Keneally, Yiyun Li, Lionel Shriver and Colm Tóibín, YA writers Charlie Higson and David Levithan; and performance poets Charlie Dark and Alicia Sometimes. New Zealand guests set to take the stage include: Tui Flower, Dick Frizzell, Charlotte Grimshaw, Lloyd Jones, Rachael King, Chris Laidlaw, Julie Le Clerc, Warren Maxwell, Gordon McLauchlan, Paula Morris, Jeffrey Paparoa Holman, Gregor Paul, Emily Perkins, John Reynolds, Anne Salmond, Elizabeth Smither, CK Stead, William Taylor, Tama Waipara, Ian Wedde, Damien Wilkins, Alison Wong and many more.

Special Events On Sale 10 March

Seven 'Special Events' go on sale on Wednesday 10 March: the gala *New Zealand Listener* Opening Night on Thursday 13 May features Colm Tóibín, Emily Perkins, Thomas Keneally, Elizabeth Gilbert and William Dalrymple. A 'High Tea' with guest speakers Tui Flower, Lauraine Jacobs, Julie Biuso and Julie Le Clerc honours the traditional fare in *A Treasury of New Zealand Baking*; TVNZ 7 will be filming 'The Good Word Debate' at St Matthew-in-the-City where Finlay Macdonald and Emily Perkins lead two teams to debate the moot 'The Book is Dead' under the watchful eye of Te Radar; and legendary raconteur Rick Gekoski talks with Kim Hill over lunch at Soul in the Viaduct. Premium evening events feature William Dalrymple (Friday 14 May) and Elizabeth Gilbert (Saturday 15 May). And the ever-popular 'Poetry Idol' is on Sunday 16 May. Potential idols should visit the festival website for more information on getting an audition.

All other festival events go on sale on Monday 29 March, with the full programme of events available in print and on-line the week before. A range of free events will be available during the festival, including a 'Rehearsed Reading' of Dave Armstrong's new play *General Ward*, courtesy of the Auckland Theatre Company, and a very special hour with C.K. Stead to celebrate the publication of his new memoir, *South-West of Eden*, on Saturday 15 May.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Angela Radford | Festival Publicist

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2010 Schools Programme

The Schools Programme is designed for intermediate and secondary school students and features YA writers David Levithan and Charlie Higson; John Carey on William Golding and *Lord of the Flies*; Thomas Keneally and Anne Salmond on early settler times in Australasia; DJ and performance poet Charlie Dark; New Zealand fiction favourites Des Hunt, William Taylor and Anna Mackenzie; Leon Davidson on the First World War, Dave Armstrong on playwriting, and the band 'Ivy Lies' on songwriting (which they've been doing since *they* were at school). Students are also being offered the opportunity to take a writing workshop with some of the writers this year. Schools bookings are open now at www.buytickets.co.nz, and a downloadable Schools Programme is available on the festival website at www.writersfestival.co.nz.

Ticketing

Special Events bookings open Wednesday 10 March. All other bookings open Monday 29 March. Door sales apply from Wednesday 12 May. **Book at** www.buytickets.co.nz or ph: 09 357 3355. (Service fees apply.) **Patrons, Festival Club members and Friends of the Festival** receive a range of attractive benefits such as priority booking periods, discounts on tickets, access to the exclusive Festival Club, and guaranteed premium seating. For more information, phone the Festival office (09 376 8074) or visit www.writersfestival.co.nz.

The Auckland Writers & Readers Festival Charitable Trust Warmly Thanks:

GOLD SPONSORS: *New Zealand Herald*, *New Zealand Listener* **SILVER SPONSORS:** Auckland City Council, Crowne Plaza Auckland **BRONZE SPONSORS:** Allpress Espresso, Delmaine Fine Foods, Documentary Channel, McGovern Online, Man O'War Wine **PUBLISHER SPONSORS:** Allen & Unwin, Hachette NZ, HarperCollins NZ, Penguin Books NZ, Random House NZ **SCHOOLS PROGRAMME SPONSORS:** Sharpie, South Pacific Pictures, Stationery Warehouse, Text Publishing, The College Herald **FOUNDATIONS, TRUSTS AND GRANTMAKERS:** APRA, ASB Community Trust, Asia: New Zealand Foundation, Australia Council for the Arts, Creative New Zealand, Lion Foundation, North Shore City Council, Sir John Logan Campbell Residuary Estate, SkyCity Auckland Community Trust **STRATEGIC PARTNERS:** ALT, THE EDGE, GEON **SUPPORTERS AND SUPPLIERS:** BJ Ball, Booksellers New Zealand, British Council New Zealand, Dilmah, Juice TV, Kaleidoscope, Liquid Studios, Nielsen BookData, Qantas.

PRESS RELEASE ENDS

INTERNATIONAL BIOGRAPHIES ATTACHED

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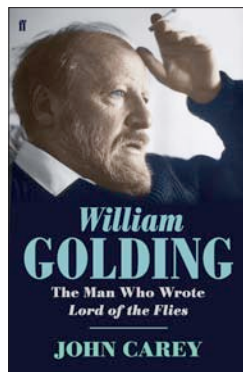
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INTERNATIONAL GUESTS

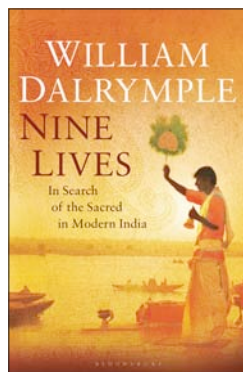
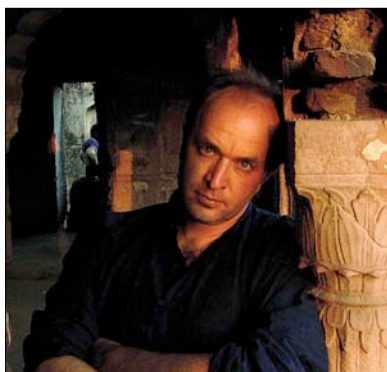
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Confirmed as at 8 March 2010

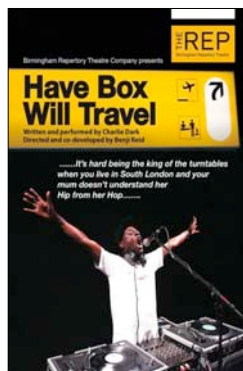
John Carey (England); William Dalrymple (Scotland/India); Charlie Dark (England); Jill Dawson (England); John Freeman (United States); Rick Gekoski (United States/England); Elizabeth Gilbert (United States); Charlie Higson (England); Thomas Keneally (Australia); David Levithan (United States); Antony Loewenstein (Australia); Ben Naparstek (Australia); Michael Otterman (United States); Lionel Shriver (United States/England); Alicia Sometimes (Australia); Sarah Thornton (Canada/England); Colm Tóibín (Ireland); Adrian Wooldridge (England); Yiyun Li (China/United States).



John Carey is Emeritus Merton Professor of English at Oxford University, a distinguished critic, reviewer, broadcaster, Booker judge and the author of many books, including studies of Donne, Dickens and Thackeray. His celebrated polemic *What Good are the Arts?* (2005) provoked much debate and discussion. A regular critic on BBC2's *Newsnight Review* as well as chief book reviewer for the London *Sunday Times*, he also edited *The Faber Book of Reportage*, *The Faber Book of Science* and *The Faber Book of Utopias*. His most recent work is the acclaimed biography of Nobel Prize-winning novelist *William Golding: The Man Who Wrote Lord of the Flies* (2009). John divides his time between a home in Oxford and converted 18th century farm cottages in the Cotswolds. His interests, other than 'writing to stimulate and involve the general reader', are keeping bees and printmaking.



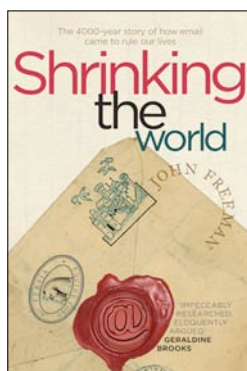
William Dalrymple was born in Scotland and brought up on the shores of the Firth of Forth. An internationally acclaimed writer and historian, he wrote the highly acclaimed bestseller *In Xanadu* when he was 22. *City of Djinns* won the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award and the *Sunday Times* Young British Writer of the Year Award; *From the Holy Mountain* won the Scottish Book of the Year Prize, *The Age of Kali* won the French Prix D'Astrolabe; and *White Mughals* won the Wolfson Prize for History 2003 and the Scottish Book of the Year Prize. *The Last Mughal* was longlisted for the BBC Four Samuel Johnson Prize and won the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize. His latest book is *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India* (2009). William lives with his wife and three children on a farm outside Delhi.



Charlie Dark is a poet, writer, producer, DJ, and one third of the critically-acclaimed hip hop-inspired trio Attica Blues. He has toured around the globe and makes regular appearances on the international literature and spoken word circuit. An experienced tutor and workshop facilitator, he runs courses on creative writing and poetry for young people and adults throughout the year and has been a Poet Coach for the London Teenage Poetry Slam for three years running. Inspired by his work in the communities, Charlie also runs Alphabet Soup, a spoken word night featuring established poets alongside young emerging voices. He founded Blacktronica, a loose collective of poets, painters, musicians, film makers and other creative types, which pushes, explores and unifies the innovative sounds of the black electronic music scene in the UK with its global cousins. Blacktronica holds regular gatherings at venues around the world alongside a hugely successful four-year residency at the Institute for Contemporary Arts in London. *Supported by the British Council New Zealand*



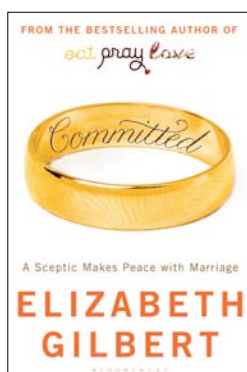
Jill Dawson began publishing at the age of 22 by winning first prize in a national short story competition. She went on to win an Eric Gregory Award for poetry, and published her first novel *Trick of the Light* in 1996. She is the author of six novels and editor of six anthologies of poetry and short stories. She also writes scripts and journalism and has written one non-fiction book for teenagers. Her other novels are: *Maggie* (1998); *Fred & Edie* (2000); *Wild Boy* (2003); *Watch Me Disappear* (2006), and *The Great Lover* (2009), which was a Richard and Judy Summer Read. *Fred & Edie* was shortlisted for both the 2000 Whitbread Novel Award and the 2001 Orange Prize for Fiction, and voted one of 50 essential novels by a living author. Her work has been translated into more than a dozen languages, and her writing has been described by the Whitbread judges as 'inventing a female language where Jean Rhys leaves off'. She is currently director of Gold Dust, a mentoring scheme for writers. Jill lives with her husband and two sons in an award-winning eco house in the Cambridgeshire Fens.



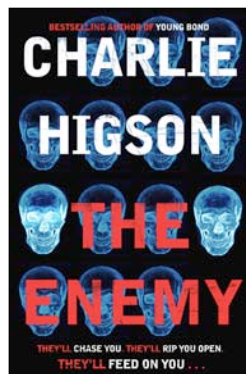
John Freeman is the Editor of *Granta*, an award-winning writer and prolific book critic who wrote reviews for over 200 publications, including the *New York Times Book Review*, *The Guardian* and the *Wall Street Journal*. A former president of the National Book Critics Circle, he won the 2007 James Patterson PageTurner award for running a national campaign to bring back book coverage in the media. He solicited, edited and posted more than 100 essays about the importance of reading, the necessity of criticism, and the role communities can play in their own newspapers. John's first book, *Shrinking the World The 4,000-year story of how email came to rule our lives* (2009), is a short history of our need for correspondence, and an examination of the astonishing growth of email and how it is changing our lives — not always for the better. He cites the work of linguists, behaviourists, cultural critics and philosophers of all flavours to explain our seemingly endless cultural addiction, and ends with, as you might expect from the title, a plea for the sort of communication we've abandoned in the face of a bottomless inbox. John lives in New York City and London.



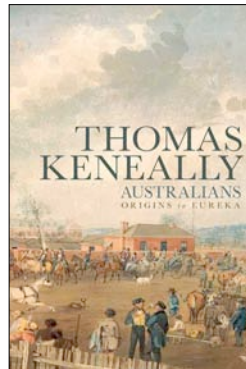
Rick Gekoski is a writer and rare books specialist, possibly best known for his 2004 bestseller *Tolkien's Gown & Other Stories of Great Authors and Rare Books*. He has worked as a University teacher, publisher, critic, bibliographer and broadcaster. He was a Booker Prize judge in 2005, and is Chairman of the Judges for the International Booker Prize 2011. He started a rare-books business in 1982, and is one of the world's leading specialist dealers in modern English, Irish and American literature. Once described as the 'Bill Bryson of the book world', Rick's new book is called *Outside of a Dog: A Bibliomemoir* - a term and genre he has more or less invented. He takes us on a fascinating literary journey in which he reveals the intricate relations between his reading and his life, through 25 books which have particular meaning for him. After finishing his DPhil in English at Oxford, Rick Gekoski taught at Warwick University until 1987. In 2008, he became a British Citizen (as well as an American one) remarking that he now feels 'equally ill at ease in both cultures'. He lives in London and spends part of every year in New Zealand.



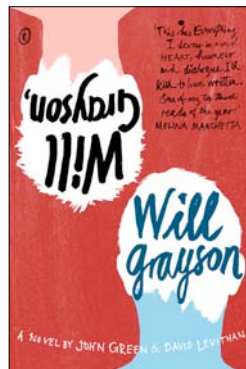
Elizabeth Gilbert is an award-winning writer of both fiction and non-fiction. Her short story collection *Pilgrims* was a finalist for the PEN/Hemingway award, and her novel *Stern Men* was a *New York Times* notable book. *The Last American Man* (2002) was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critic's Circle Award. She is best known for her 2006 memoir *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything*, which was published in over thirty languages and has sold more than seven million copies worldwide. The film adaptation starring Julia Roberts and Javier Bardem will be released in 2011. Her new book, *Committed: A Skeptic Makes Peace with Marriage*, begins where *Eat, Pray, Love* ended. Elizabeth lives with her husband in New Jersey.



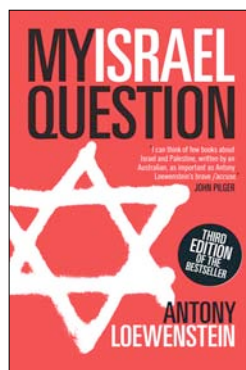
After a varied career as the singer in a pop group and a decorator, **Charlie Higson** started writing comedy for television in the late 1980s, creating the characters of Loadsamoney and Stavros with Harry Enfield for 'Saturday Night Live'. Working with his long-term writing partner, Paul Whitehouse, Charlie's next project was 'Harry Enfield's Television Programme'. Charlie and Paul then went on to create and star in 'The Fast Show' (1994-2000). Following the success of 'The Fast Show', Charlie worked on a number of other TV comedies, as performer, writer and producer, including shows like 'The Smell of Reeves and Mortimer', 'Shooting Stars' and 'Randall and Hopkirk Deceased'. He wrote four thriller novels for adults in the early 1990s and recently wrote a series of five James Bond books for a younger readership. He has now launched a new horror/zombie/adventure series for kids, *The Enemy*, with book 2, *The Dead*, out in October. He appears in the comedy series 'Bellamy's People', a new show he has once again co-created with Paul Whitehouse. Charlie lives in London. *Supported by Penguin Books*



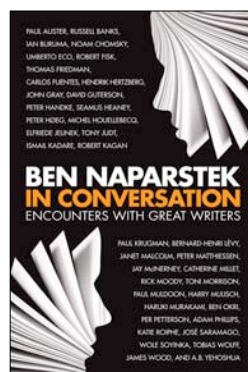
Thomas Keneally was born in Sydney in 1935, and is one of the most successful contemporary Australian writers. Short-listed for the Booker three times with *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (1972), *Gossip from the Forest* (1975) and *Confederates* (1979), he won the 1982 Booker Prize with *Schindler's Ark*, which was subsequently made into an Oscar-winning film by Stephen Spielberg in 1993. Keneally has won the Miles Franklin Award twice with *Bring Larks and Heroes* and *Three Cheers for the Paraclete*, and he was awarded the Order of Australia in 1983 for his services to Australian Literature. His most recent work is the first in a three-volume series on the history of Australia, *Australians: Origins to Eureka*. Successive volumes will be published in 2011 and 2013. His latest novel is *The People's Train*, which was published in 2009. Tom is married with two daughters and lives in Sydney.



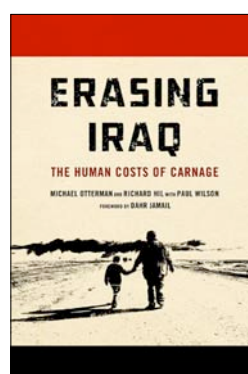
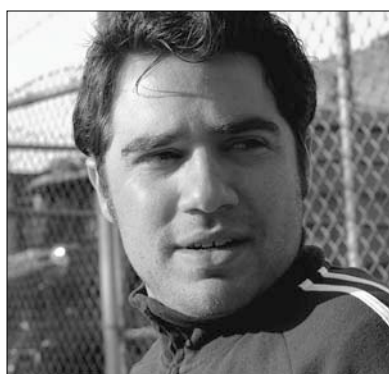
David Levithan is the award-winning and *New York Times* bestselling author of numerous YA books, including *Boy Meets Boy*, *Are We There Yet?* and *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist* (written with Rachel Cohn and now a film starring Kat Denning and *Juno*'s Michael Cera). In David's latest collaborative novel, *Will Grayson*, *Will Grayson* (2010), he alternates chapters with John Green (*Paper Towns*), giving a unique voice to two teens, both named Will Grayson. When the Will Graysons cross paths in a chance meeting, they find their lives going in new and unexpected directions. As they build towards the musical being staged by their boy/friend, the irresistible and unforgettable Tiny Cooper, everything seems as though it will fall apart. But things might just come together. David edits lots of books at Scholastic in the US and is founder of the PUSH imprint which looks for new voices and authors in YA literature. He also takes lots of pictures, and lives in New Jersey.



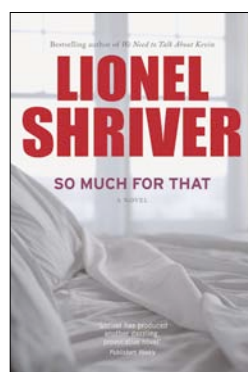
Antony Loewenstein is a freelance journalist, author and blogger, and an atheist Jewish-Australian political activist. He has written for *The Guardian*, *Haaretz*, *The Washington Post*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian*, Sydney's *Sun-Herald*, *ZNet*, *The Big Issue*, *Crikey*, *CounterPunch* and others. He writes a regular column for online magazine *newmatilda.com* and is a board member of Macquarie University's Centre for Middle East and North African Studies. He appears regularly on radio, in public and at universities discussing current affairs and politics. A contributor to *Not Happy, John* (2004), a bestseller on the controversy over the awarding of the Sydney Peace Prize to Hanan Ashrawi, and *To A Time to Speak Out* (2008), on the rise of global Jewish dissent, Antony is also the co-founder of Independent Australian Jewish Voices. His 2008 book *The Blogging Revolution* is about the internet in repressive regimes. His bestseller on the Israel/Palestine conflict, *My Israel Question* (1st edn, 2006; 2nd edn 2007), was re-released in 2009 in a fully updated third edition. Antony lives in Sydney.



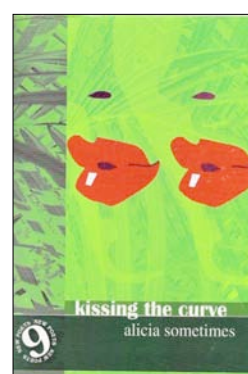
Ben Naparstek was appointed Editor of *The Monthly*, a magazine which focuses on Australian politics, society and culture (www.themonthly.com.au), in May 2009 at the age of 23. He has degrees in arts and law from the University of Melbourne, and undertook a graduate fellowship at Johns Hopkins University before returning to Melbourne to take up his new role. Ben has written about books and ideas for more than 40 newspapers and magazines over the last eight years. His first book, *In Conversation: Encounters with Great Writers* (2009), is a collection of interviews with famous and sometimes elusive writers: Paul Auster, Russell Banks, Ian Buruma, Noam Chomsky, Umberto Eco, Robert Fisk, Thomas Friedman, Carlos Fuentes, Hendrik Hertzberg, John Gray, David Guterson, Peter Handke, Seamus Heaney, Peter Hoeg, Michel Houellebecq, Elfriede Jelinek, Tony Judt, Ismail Kadare, Robert Kagan, Paul Krugman, Bernard-Henri Levy, Janet Malcolm, Peter Matthiessen, Jay McInerney, Catherine Millet, Rick Moody, Toni Morrison, Paul Muldoon, Harry Mulisch, Haruki Murakami, Ben Okri, Per Petterson, Adam Phillips, Katie Roiphe, Jose Saramago, Wole Soyinka, Graham Swift, Tobias Wolff, James Wood, and A.B. Yehoshua. It is being translated into Portuguese and Chinese. He is also co-editor, with Justin Clemens, of *The Jacqueline Rose Reader*, due out through Duke University Press early 2011.



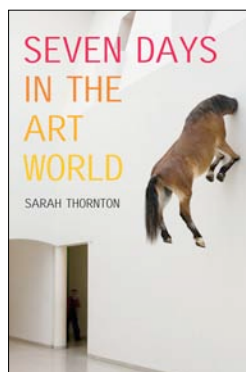
Michael Otterman is a journalist and human rights consultant based in New York City. He is the author of two books: *American Torture: From the Cold War to Abu Ghraib and Beyond* (Pluto Press/Melbourne University Publishing 2007) and *Erasing Iraq: The Human Costs of Carnage* (Pluto Press 2010, with Hil and Wilson). He is a graduate of Boston University (BS, Journalism, 2003), University of Sydney (MA, Peace and Conflict Studies, 2006) and was Visiting Scholar at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Sydney, from 2006 to 2009. As a consultant, he has worked with NGO's from around the globe including Jubilee Australia and Catalyst Inc.



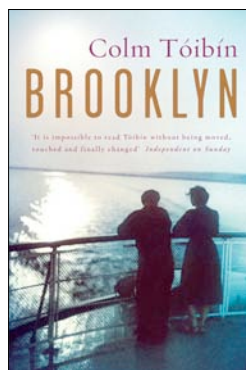
Lionel Shriver is the author of eight previous novels, as well as a journalist for the *Guardian*, the *New York Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, among many other publications. An international bestseller that's sold over a million copies worldwide, *We Need to Talk About Kevin* won the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2005, and has been translated into 25 languages. Her new novel, *So Much For That*, will be released in New Zealand in early April. Lionel Shriver lives in London and New York City.



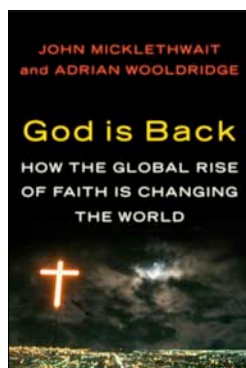
Alicia Sometimes is a writer, poet, broadcaster and musician. She has performed spoken word over 400 times at many venues, festivals and events and had her poetry published around the world, and conducted numerous workshops in cities and regional areas working with communities to showcase poetry performances. She co-wrote and directed the poetry planetarium sell-out show *Elemental* at the Melbourne International Arts Festival in 2009. Her work has been on radio many times and she is currently a presenter on 3RRR with a weekly show. In 2004 she co-organised the first national poetry radio slam on Australian Radio National, and she was co-editor of the literary journal *Going Down Swinging* for seven years. Her books include *kissing the curve* and *Soundtrack*. Most recently, she completed a tour of Canada featuring at the Festival d'Amériques in Montreal. Alicia lives in Melbourne.



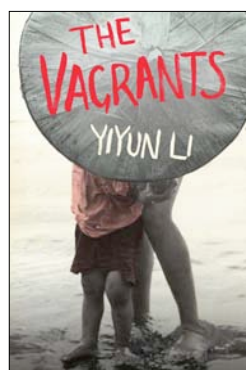
Sarah Thornton is a Canadian writer and sociologist of culture who moved to Britain on a Commonwealth Scholarship to research a PhD on youth subcultures, having already completed a BA in Art History. That thesis was published as *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (1995). She once ran the MA in Media Studies at Sussex University, and has been a visiting research fellow at Goldsmiths, University of London. Since 2003, she has been investigating the social dynamics of contemporary art. Her second book, *Seven Days in the Art World* (2008), is a witty series of non-fiction narratives, revealing the inner workings of the institutions that contribute to an artist's place in art history. Based on intensive ethnographic research (i.e. hundreds of hours of participant observation and in-depth interviews with over 250 people), the book is an international hit, translated into ten languages. Thornton is currently the chief writer on contemporary art for *The Economist*. She lives in London and has contributed commentary to many television and radio shows and publications, including *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, *Artforum.com*, *The Art Newspaper*, and *The New Yorker*.



Colm Tóibín is one of Ireland's most well-known writers. He graduated from the University College in Dublin and headed to Barcelona, the city that later inspired his first novel, *The South* (1990), and non-fiction work *Homage to Barcelona* (1990). His non-fiction includes *Bad Blood: A Walk Along the Irish Border* (1994), *The Sign of the Cross: Travels in Catholic Europe* (1994), and *The Irish Famine* (1999). He edited *The Penguin Book of Irish Fiction* (1999), and published a book of essays *Love in a Dark Time: Gay Lives from Wilde to Almodovar* in 2002, when he also became a Fellow at the Centre for Scholars and Writers at New York Public Library, enabling him to research the life of Irish dramatist Lady Augusta Gregory for his book *Lady Gregory's Toothbrush* (2002). He has written six novels including *The South* (1990), *The Heather Blazing* (1992), *The Story of the Night* (1996), *The Blackwater Lightship* (1999), which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, *The Master* (2004), for which he won the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award in 2006, and his latest novel *Brooklyn* (2009), winner of the 2009 Costa Book of the Year. He continues to work as a novelist, journalist, literary critic and university lecturer and divides his time between Ireland and the United States.



Adrian Wooldridge is a long-standing journalist for *The Economist*: currently he writes the Schumpeter Column and is the Management Editor. He has also served as the magazine's Washington Bureau Chief, Los Angeles Correspondent, and Social Policy Editor (specializing in education and health care). The co-author (with fellow *Economist* journalist John Micklethwait) of five books on globalization and business, his most recent book, *God is Back*, shows how and why religion is booming around the world and reveals its vast effects on the global economy, politics and culture. He is about to re-release an updated edition of his 1996 book, *The Witch Doctors*, an entertaining yet serious guide to today's management theories and gurus. Adrian has written *Economist* surveys on entrepreneurship and the global search for talent, as well as on telecommunications, education, multinational companies and management consultancy. He's also written public policy papers on education, on meritocracy and classless society, and a book on American politics. He lives in London.



Yiyun Li grew up in Beijing and moved to the United States in 1996. She has had stories and essays published in *The New Yorker*, *Best American Short Stories*, *O. Henry Prize Stories* and elsewhere. Her debut collection *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers* (2005) won the inaugural Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award, the PEN/Hemingway Foundation Award and the *Guardian* First Book Award in 2006, and the California Book Award for first fiction. It was shortlisted for the Kiriama Prize and the Orange Prize for New Writers, and made into an award-winning film directed by Wayne Wang. She was selected by *Granta* as one of the 21 Best Young American Novelists under 35 in 2007, and is a contributing editor to the Brooklyn-based literary magazine, *A Public Space*. Her debut novel, *The Vagrants*, is set during a time of the anti-Communist groundswell in late 1970s China. Yiyun Li lives in Oakland, California with her husband and their two sons, and teaches at the University of California, Davis. *Supported by the Asia: New Zealand Foundation*