

Sleepers at the Age Melbourne Writers' Festival

August saw Sleepers running five nights at this year's Age Melbourne Writers' Festival. We ate lots of the free chocolates at the bar.

Rundown in brief: 21st to 25th August

Saturday night was the inaugural Babble BAM! Slam, featuring twenty of Melbourne's hottest spoken word poets. These guys performed in teams of four (team names: Still Life with Mirrors, Five is a Four-Letter Word, The Mike Oldfield Five, Trophy Wives and Downloaders of Death). The first round was a duo piece, the second was a randomly selected poet performing a solo piece, and the third a group piece. There was a lot of poet sweat on stage afterwards. A massive amount of hard work had gone into preparing for the night, and it showed at every turn.

On Sunday night Michael Heyward (Text Publishing) convened a panel showcasing *Meanjin*, with Morag Fraser, current editor Ian Britain and Linda Jaivin, who discussed, amongst other things, why anyone would start a literary journal and how *Meanjin* has kept going, how many people are employed by literary journals and how many unpaid hours go into them, and – very importantly – why magazines and journals like *Meanjin* have to be allowed to lose money. The night was very encouraging for anyone interested in following a career in this kind of publishing, while at the same time being brutal about the realities of it.



Frank Moorhouse and Joelistics side by side

Monday night, our third Salon, featured our most eclectic range of performers and writers. On the stage we had Joelistics from hip-hip group TZU, blogger and short story writer, Carlie Lazar, and one of Australia's favourite short story aficionados, Frank Moorhouse, hosted by the one and only Stella Glorie from the Victorian Writers' Centre. At the end of the night it was hard to believe that these guys had never met prior to the evening.

On Tuesday night we were shown how funny and serious (and sometimes even sad) comedy writers can be. We were treated to the likes of down-to-earth Rachel Berger, raucous Russell McGilton and the sadly cynical and ultimately take-homeable Sean Condon. Convened by the also very funny Fiona Scott-Norman, this night provided much entertainment and loads of very useful information (which we hadn't counted on because we didn't realise they would be so clever as well as funny)...



Perfect Pitch players, Cate, Josh, Paul & Kathryn

Our final night was a bit sad for us because we were just getting into the swing of things. On Wednesday, Davey Dreamnation Prater (www.cordite.org.au) hosted an evening of entertainment that made *Perfect Match* look like just a game. As the host of *Perfect Pitch*, Davey took the four contestants – Kathryn O'Halloran, Paul Mitchell, Josh Lefers and Cate Kennedy – through a series of two rounds of questions before they were taken into the third round: The Pitch. Judges Ian Syson (Vulgar Press), Erica Wagner (Allen & Unwin) and Bob Sessions (Penguin) summed up why they would or wouldn't be interested in taking on the contestants' manuscripts, and then we all went down the pub to drown our sorrows.

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Lou and Zoe, comfy on the MWF Salon stage

Manuscripts

Don't forget, we love reading manuscripts, and we are prepared to offer feedback on yours for a bottle of wine or a six-pack of beer (if you are mailing distance away rather than dropping-off distance, contact us to find out how you can buy us a bottle on tab at our local). You must be prepared for sincere and honest feedback. If you are specifically looking for publication and not just feedback, let us know in your cover letter.

More photographs and information about Sleepers can always be found on our website: www.sleeperspublishing.com

The October Salon is Next

The next Sleepers Salon (proudly supported by Spinach?) is showcasing Cardigan Press. In their own words...

"Are you sick of commercial publishing tripe (insert your bugbear of choice here)? So were we. Particularly sick of being told that nobody wants to read short stories any more and that publishing conglomerates don't know how to sell them. So we pulled our fingers out and formed Cardigan Press, which operates on a collective model, run by contributors who love to read short stories as well as write them. Cardiganers believe that publishing doesn't need to be hamstrung by a radical underestimation of public taste. Beige is OK for hotel rooms, but you don't want to be reading it, do you?"

Cardigan recently released their third annual anthology – *All Change Please* – at, or rather next to, the Melbourne Writers' Festival. It was one of the biggest launches you will ever see, and it was launched by Cult Animation Guru, Adam Elliot (Director, Harvey Krumpet) who was just lovely. The Cardigan Press are amazing in many ways, and we want to celebrate their amazingness. So, come along and buy some Christmas presents. As well as the current one, the second anthology, *Normal Service Will Resume*, will be on sale on the night.

We will be featuring readings from Cardigan Press contributors, a discussion with some of the founders of the collective, and a very special version of the Post-It Note Poetry Competition (not sponsored by 3M).

Where: at the Planet Café on Brunswick Street, Fitzroy

When: 8pm on Thursday the 21st of October 2004 (should end before the 22nd of October)

Cost: \$6 plus the cost of a Cardigan Press book and any beer/wines you want to buy (us)

The Sleepers Almanac – taking orders now for Christmas

This year's Sleepers Almanac is still in production. But this much we know: it's going to feature short stories and letters, lists and poetry, cartoons and recipes, and a delicious cover. You are going to want it in your kitchen, on your coffee table, next to your bed, and in your best friend's bathroom. It will make you smarter and definitely better looking.

Contact our distribution coordinator to pre-order a copy now by emailing narelle@sleeperspublishing.com.



On Thursday at the Writers' Festival Lou and Zoe MC'd a series of lectures in the Merlyn. Here is a picture of the lovely audience that Zoe took. Thank you audience for saying 'Cheese' with such gusto.

Important Notice

Come the end of September, or the beginning of October depending on how quickly paint dries, Sleepers will be moving to a new home. From Soho style bohemia to the slightly grubby bunker behind a furniture store in Collingwood, Sleepers will continue their commitment to emerging and established writers in Australia and around the world. In the meantime you can always find us at:

65 Harmsworth Street, Collingwood
Australia 3066
sleepers@sleeperspublishing.com
www.sleeperspublishing.com

Sleepers' star attractions at the Melbourne Writers' Festival this year were:

Emilie Zoey Baker
Rachel Berger
Ian Britain
Sean Condon
Crazy Elf
Esteban Do Santos
George Dunford
Adam Ford
Morag Fraser
Corey Frost
Stella Glorie

Simon Hall
Michael Heyward
Tracee Hutchison
Andy Jackson
Chloe Jackson Wilmott
Terry Jaensch
Linda Jaivin
Joelistics from TZU
Cate Kennedy
Klare Lanson
Carlie Lazar

Josh Lefers
Ian McBryde
Russell McGilton
Clare Mckay
Paul Mitchell
Jarrod Molloy
Lawrence Mooney
Frank Moorhouse
Phil Norton
Kathryn O'Halloran
David Prater

Amy Rhodes
Fiona Scott-Norman
Bob Sessions
alicia sometimes
Ian Syson
Evelyn Tadros
Justin Treyvaud
Erica Wagner
Richard Watts
Sean M Whelan
Stuart White

* If you see any of these people, grab them and kiss them quickly. They deserve it.

Sleepers raises a hot, sweaty arm to the following people for their cameras, their time, their presence, and their enduring love and support during the Melbourne Writers' Festival this year: Augusta Zeong, Rob, and Augusta's dad, Louise Pine, Justin Treyvaud, Paul McFadden, Paul Davis, Simon Claws, Claire Pittman, Nick Dattner, Gaye Swinn, Kealin Hanigan and Mike at Prologica, Kate Stones, Janet Greason, Alex Grantham and Mat Shears.

