

WORD TRAVELS STORY FEST BACK FOR SECOND SLAM

[Tickets on sale for Sydney's Performing Writers' Festival](#)

A slamming success last year, the Word Travels Story Festival is back for its second round of poetry slam, spoken word, stories, monologues, competitions and live literary mayhem.

Over three jam-packed days, Friday 10 – Sunday 12 October, 2014 the nation's wittiest wordsmiths will descend upon venues at The Rocks, Sydney Opera House and Sydney Dance Lounge, for a number of events and forums, filling Sydney Harbour with probing ideas, powerful new voices and cheering (yes cheering at poetry event) audiences.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of Australian Poetry Slam. Miles Merrill, Creative Director and Founder of Word Travels Story Fest, introduced poetry slams to Australia in 2004, all the way from his home city of Chicago. Back then, it was the Leichhardt Poetry Slam, which grew to become the Australian Poetry Slam in a mere three years' time.

"The Australian Poetry Slam is now one of the largest performing writers' programs in the world, spawning dozens of off-shoots around the country plus events in Bali and China," said Merrill.

A highlight of the festival program this year for Merrill is a unique poetry event called 'The Literary Love-Inn'. An abandoned restaurant with romantic views will be transformed into a round robin of candle-lit spaces each featuring a poet or storyteller, using the theme "Do you love me now?"

"The Literary Love-Inn is going to be something pretty special. The nice thing about it is that we're bringing people together, making eye-contact and sharing mini poetic conversations – really breaking the wall between audience and show," Merrill said. Be warned – attendance is likely to result in falling madly in love with spoken (whispered, howled or moaned) word.

This year includes film screenings and cutting edge conversations like 'Money from Thin Air', a panel discussing the balancing act between arts and sponsorship, and 'The Benefits of Being Brown', where three writers get personal about their practice and how their cultural status has opened doors or thrown up walls.

Merrill will host a live conversation with Omar Musa, special guest of the festival and former Australian Poetry Slam Champion. A multi-faceted performer, Musa is a Malaysian-Australian playwright, novelist, hip hop artist and poet. 'Postcards from Omar Musa' will provide a fascinating insight into his colourful creative career.

A one-time-only class with a minimal capacity of participants will get you up close and personal with The Tongue. Widely considered to be one of Australia's most creative lyricists, this music festival stalwart and hip hop spoken-word 'speech therapist' is hosting a 2-hour workshop involving games, discussions and writing challenges, will allow writers to bring their words to life.

And, of course, this year's Word Travels Festival will encompass the NSW Poetry Slam Final (sold out) on Friday night and the Australian Poetry Slam National Final on Sunday night. From small towns to big cities, the most erudite and articulate of performing writers in Australia will speak, scream, whisper, howl, and shout their way to the national title.

The best thing about being in the audience for the slams? You could be chosen to judge the winner, who will then go on to perform their work at the China Bookworm, Ubud, Byron and Sydney International Readers' and Writers' Festivals in 2015.

Don't miss this electrifying three-day festival of new Australian stories told live. Be sure to secure your tickets early because, as they say, word travels fast!

WHAT: Word Travels Story Festival

WHEN: Friday 10th – Sunday 12th of October, 2014

WHERE: Pop-up venues in The Rocks, Sydney Dance Lounge and Sydney Opera House

For more information and ticketing, please visit: www.wordtravelsfestival.com

Australian Poetry Slam website: www.australianpoetryslam.com

Word Travels Facebook: www.facebook.com/wordtravels.info

Australian Poetry Slam Facebook: www.facebook.com/AustralianPoetrySlam

Australian Poetry Slam YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/AustralianPoetrySlam/videos

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