

Last week we had the fabulous Michele A'Court at a Monday lunchtime event talking about her latest book *How We Met*. About 65 people heard how she chose couples who had been together for 15 years or more and interviewed them to find how they met and their stories of connection and belonging. Michele's skills as a comedian were to the fore and she had us entertained with unlikely connections, impossible odds and strange situations.

She also gave a RAMP Talk to Wintec students about whether it's possible to make a living with a writing career in New Zealand. Michele spoke about podcasts, writing a weekly column, television appearances, regular slots on RNZ's *Nine to Noon* and *The Panel*, freelance writing for magazines, a monthly podcast for *The Spinoff* ("On The Rag"), and constant touring with comedy shows and corporate events.



We had two events on Friday for National Poetry Day. The first was a Poetry Open Mic at Hamilton Central Library at midday. More than twenty poems were read to an appreciative audience with our MC Therese Lloyd awarding Hamish the audience popularity vote.



Students and teachers from five high schools took part in an afternoon poetry workshop with Therese and experimented with a range of techniques including the exquisite corpse. They gained ideas to vary their writing and where to send work for publication.



On Saturday we had the Illustrators and Authors seminar run by the Waikato Children's Literature Association. This very successful event featured Deborah Hinde and Nikki Slade Robinson. Both women talked about the illustrator and author roles in trade and self publishing, illustration techniques, printing offshore, distribution issues, deadlines and payment arrangements as well as showing lots of examples of their drafts and finished work. Photo credit: Julie Huggins.



This week is week 5 of Hamilton Book Month!

We have a fiction writing workshop (pre-registration needed and now full) and our Fiction Three Ways panel.

Fiction Three Ways panel

<http://hamiltonbookmonth.wixsite.com/2018/fiction-three-ways>

The Meteor Theatre, 1 Victoria St, Hamilton

Friday 31 August, 6.30-8pm, free event with a glass of wine or juice

Come and enjoy our fabulous fiction panel at our 20th and final event for this year's Hamilton Book Month. Chair Kiran Dass will be asking the questions of our panellists Dame Fiona Kidman, Catherine Robertson and Julie Thomas. Don't miss our line-up of best-selling, award-winning authors who have all had new books released this year. Poppies Book Shop will have the authors' books for sale and signing and are generously sponsoring the wine for this event.

Dame Fiona Kidman is the author of some 30 books which include novels, non-fiction and poetry. She has worked as a librarian, screen writer and radio producer. Her fiction has been critically acclaimed in New Zealand and abroad, and she has received numerous awards such as the *Katherine Mansfield Fellowship*, the *Creative New Zealand Michael King Fellowship* and the *Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in Fiction*. She is the recipient of the *DNZM*, *OBE* and the *French Legion of Honour*. Her most recent novels are *All day at the Movies* and *This Mortal Boy* (July 2018).

Julie Thomas's first novel, *The Keeper of Secrets*, was published on Amazon and Smashwords and sold in excess of 52,000 copies. HarperCollins USA published it in 2013 and in 2015 HarperCollins New Zealand published *Blood, Wine and Chocolate*. This black comedic thriller debuted at number one on the Nielsen New Zealand Best Seller Fiction List. In 2016 *Rachel's Legacy*, a sequel to *The Keeper of Secrets*, was published by HarperCollins New Zealand. This also debuted at number one on the Nielsen New Zealand Fiction Best Seller List and stayed on the list for six weeks. This year *Levi's War*, the final instalment of the *Horowitz Chronicles*, was published and tells the story of the eldest son who was a spy and a partisan fighter during WW2.

Catherine Robertson's five novels have all been #1 New Zealand bestsellers. Her latest, *Gabriel's Bay*, was out in January and a sequel will be out in early 2019. Catherine reviews contemporary fiction for *The New Zealand Listener* and is a regular guest on *RNZ National's "The Panel"*, and Jesse Mulligan's *Book Chat* slot. She is on the board of LitCrawl, and on the Book Awards Trust.

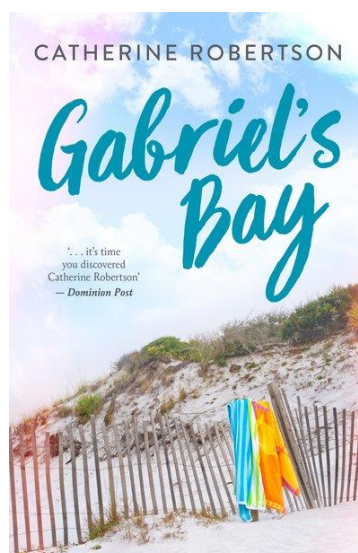
Our chair Kiran Dass is an Auckland-based writer and reviewer who has covered books and music for the *NZ Herald*, *Listener*, *Sunday* magazine, *Sunday Star-Times*, *Metro*, *Landfall*, *The Spinoff*, *The Pantograph Punch*, *The Wire (UK)*, and regularly reviews books on *RNZ's Nine to Noon* and *95bFM*. She is a 2018 *PANZ Book Design Awards* judge. Twitter: @SteelyDass





Competition

This week we have a copy of Catherine Robertson's book *Gabriel's Bay* to give away thanks to Penguin Random House. To enter the competition, email hamiltonbookmonth@gmail.com with your answer to the question "What are the names of two of Catherine Robertson's other books"? The winner must be able to collect the book from one of our Hamilton Book Month events.



Last week's competition for Michele A'Court's book *How We Met* was won by Annie Johnstone.

Hamilton Book Month is on Facebook. Like us to hear about our latest news and to learn more about August 2018 authors and events. Our website is <http://hamiltonbookmonth.wixsite.com/2018> and has details of the 20 different events this year. If you think others will be interested in the newsletter, please share it with them. They can email hamiltonbookmonth@gmail.com to joining our mailing list. If you wish to unsubscribe please email hamiltonbookmonth@gmail.com with the subject line "unsubscribe".