

# RED ROOM NEWS



## SUPPORT RED ROOM

If you would like to chat with me personally about how you can support our organization, please call (02) 9319 5090 or email [johanna@redroomcompany.org](mailto:johanna@redroomcompany.org)



### Welcome to The Red Room Company newsletter!

It arrives alongside our final public poetry project in the 2009 program: Sea Things. On October 1st, Sea Things was launched from Constitution Dock in Hobart with Commander Anthony Vine of the Navy and commissioned poet Graeme Miles with support from Arts Tasmania.

On October 18th, the journey set off from Fremantle with poems by Perth Modern School students, workshopped by Johanna Featherstone.

The project is being covered by ABC Radio National and their Pool network site. Community radio in Thursday Island, Perth and Melbourne,

as well as the Illawarra Mercury in Wollongong, has run local stories on the project. We would like to especially thank David Jordan, our logistical advisor for the project, for helping to design and realize our itinerary and for his ongoing work to keep the duffle bags in motion.



**A full itinerary, photographs and blog are available online. See the attached flyer for details about how you can follow the project.**



## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

Sea Things is the first project to be featured entirely on our new website, which was launched in late September and is currently getting its finishing touches. We would like to thank Michelle Craig and Thomas Ashelford at Ether for their management of the site, and Michelle Moore at Cyan Loves Magenta Design for her rich new design.

[www.redroomcompany.org](http://www.redroomcompany.org)



## PAPERCUTS EXPANDS

The second half of this year has been a full one for our Papercuts program. Macquarie Fields High School and Abbotsleigh have undertaken dynamic workshops of their students' poetry with poets Lachlan Brown and Anna Kerdijk Nicholson. In a first for the program, the two schools are creating a collaborative website and epic poem, and Abbotsleigh is currently displaying students' work at Next Chapter Books in Wahroonga.

In the new term, Papercuts will revisit Concord High School with poet Ed Wright, and make its debut at Norfolk Island Central School with poet Elizabeth Allen. Judging by the ingenuity of Concord's 2008 "poetry fridge" display, and Norfolk's student-run newspaper and radio program, we'll be seeing some great ideas being explored.

Both Johanna Featherstone and Bonny Cassidy have recently been active in extending the scope of Papercuts to include professional development for teachers of poetry. At Ravenswood in Sydney and Peninsula High School in Victoria, they have discussed poetry activities and interpretation with inspiring English teachers, and we hope to do more of this in 2010. In the meantime, we will be presenting Red Room's new Toilet Doors Poetry kit of classroom activities at the annual English Teachers' Association conference in November.

**For copies of the poems written by Johanna and students at Ravenswood, contact: Marilyn Rickard, mrickard@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au**

## THE POET'S LIFE WORKS CONCLUDES



Explore the project archive in our new site to find our most recently ended project, The Poet's Life Works, which was another kind of national odyssey – through different poetic voices, styles and oeuvres. Its four Sydney events were topped off in September by a session at the Brisbane Writers' Festival featuring our final Life Works poet, Lionel Fogarty, and a reading from past Red Room poets.



The project's sustained duration and pitch was a challenging and thrilling undertaking, and we are chuffed to have been gifted works by three of its commissioned artists from Chalkhorse Gallery – Oliver Watts, Orlan Erin Raleigh and Tara Marynowsky.

**The catalogue compiles ten postcards in an attractive aluminium tin bound with string. It contains a project card, excerpts from specially commissioned works by each poet. It can be purchased from the website for \$10.00.**

Bent over  
this galaxy,  
watercolour clouds

on breeze-rippled surface,  
plates opening  
like snake-eyes;

where on his knees  
faith became biological,  
a calcareous ministry

he longed to dissever,  
vivisection and its devotee.

- from "Rockpool, Undertow Bay" by Michelle Leber (VIC), Sea Things contributor



## POEMS TO SHARE

You can also find writing ideas in our forthcoming collaboration with designers Corban & Blair. After releasing Red Room poems by Claire Potter, Andrew Slattery and Kate Fagan as inserts to the boutique's luscious journal and album series, we have revisited the Red Room archive to create a set of poetry cards for national distribution. The set includes forty poems or poem excerpts written for Red Room, each paired with a writing exercise or activity for grown-ups and kids alike.

**In the mood? Try this word game created by Sydney poet Greg McLaren:  
Pen a love poem with words of no more than four letters.**

## THANKYOU

To Matthew McCarron and KPMG for providing in-kind assistance with Red Room's finance matters.



## COMING UP

**From Macquarie Street to the Hawkesbury, we go where the words take us!**

On **October 28th**, we will be appearing at the Parliament Poetry Soiree at Parliament House, Macquarie St Sydney, 6pm. Join the pollied reading original poems – contact [johanna@redroomcompany.org](mailto:johanna@redroomcompany.org)

**Inspired Reading** continues at the MCA in December, when Johanna Featherstone will be leading a discussion of Kate Grenville's novel *The Secret River*, selected by artist Fiona Foley whose retrospective will play host to the evening.

Our **2010 program** is rapidly taking shape, with our first project for the new year to be Clubs & Socs – an investigation of the language of private societies. The project's results will be partly performed at the Conservatorium's Open Day in March. We are also currently planning something off the beaten track for The Sydney Writers' Festival in May. Five poets will be commissioned to take up a working week's residency in five of Sydney's CBD buildings. The poets' resulting work will be displayed in the buildings via a mapped public walk, and will be read at one event in the Festival program.

**We hope to see you next at the finale event of Sea Things:**

6.00-7.30pm, November 26th at the Royal Australian Naval Sailing Association, Sir David Martin Reserve, New Beach Rd, Rushcutters Bay, Sydney.