

**4-7 APRIL
2024**

**Milford Asset
Management
Presents**

ASPIRING CONVERSATIONS

Festival of Ideas & Kōrero

Presented by the Wānaka Festival of Colour
www.aspiringconversations.co.nz

We extend our gratitude to the businesses and organisations that have generously supported this year's Aspiring Conversations programme.

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HA WĀ WHAKAARO – A TIME FOR THINKING

After two cancelled Aspiring Conversation programmes we are delighted to be sharing this year's stellar line up of speakers and artists with you.

We continue to live in challenging times and believe it's more important than ever to gather, to discuss, listen and reflect on the issues that affect us all in our community and the world at large.

We're delighted to welcome back Kathryn Ryan who will chair several of our sessions. Her experience, warmth and wit add such depth to our conversations.

Finally, our heartfelt thanks to our supporters, funders, benefactors and patrons. Without you all this programme would simply not be possible!

Wānaka Festival Team

As some of the issues we face locally, nationally and globally become ever-more complex, it's important we all keep talking and listening. I know many in our district look forward to this annual opportunity to come together and share ideas against a truly inspiring backdrop.

On behalf the community, I welcome all returning speakers, event organisers and volunteers as well as anyone coming to Aspiring Conversations for the first time. Enjoy the kōrero.

Glyn Lewers – Mayor of Queenstown Lakes District



Glyn Lewers
Mayor of
Queenstown
Lakes District



Philip Tremewan
Aspiring
Conversations
Programmer



Sophie Kelly
Aspiring
Conversations
Programmer



Alistair King
Chair - Southern
Lakes Arts Festival
Trust

The Festival Team

Sophie Kelly & Philip Tremewan –
Co-Programmers Aspiring Conversations
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Laura Williamson – Event Manager
Aaron Thulé – Ticketing Manager
Michelle Lafferty, Elephant Publicity
– Publicist
Sally Norman – Venue Manager
Dennis Schwarz – Lighting
Entertainment Solutions – Sound & AV
Matt Quirk, Noko Studio – Graphic Design
Special thanks to all our crew and wonderful
volunteers

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Trevor Crawford
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Annis Somerville
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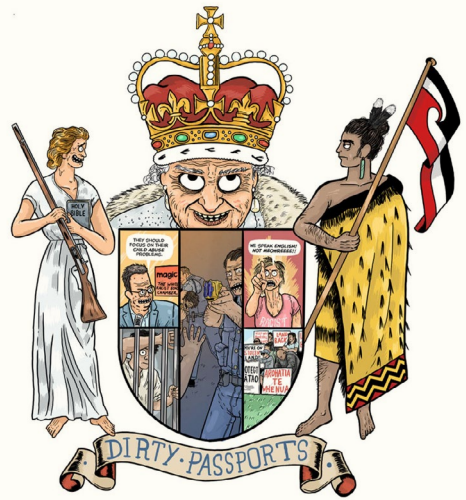
Fiona Rowley – Settlor
Prue Wallis – Patron

DIRTY PASSPORTS

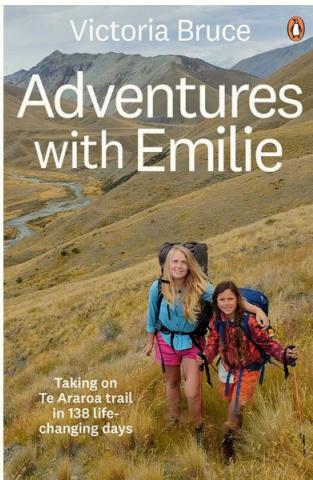
Chinese-Kiwi playwright Nathan Joe has curated a celebration of the finest BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) storytellers and spoken word artists.

Dirty Passports features your favourite minorities behaving badly. Untwisting their tongues and shattering stereotypes all for the audience's displeasure.

This special session will showcase Auckland based slam poet winners **Eric Soakai** who is of Samoan, Tongan, German, Scottish and Irish descent, and spoken word artist and educator **Ngaio Simmons** (Ngāti Porou), interdisciplinary artist **Alvie McKree** (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu ki Whangaroa, St Vincent, Barbados), Dunedin-based writer and educator **Rushi Vyas** and celebrated playwright **Nathan Joe**.



.....
Thursday 4 April, 8pm
Rhyme x Reason
\$30/\$15 Students
90 minutes, including interval



VICTORIA BRUCE

Adventures with Emilie

A mother and daughter's wild journey to rediscover the wonder and restorative power of nature.

In 2021, Victoria Bruce quit her corporate job, packed up her life and embarked on the Te Araroa trail with her seven-year-old daughter, Emilie. On the 3000-kilometre journey that traverses the length of Aotearoa, the duo faced Covid lockdowns, the harsh elements of New Zealand's backcountry and even a near-death experience.

This session will be chaired by Kerry Sunderland, writer and programmer of Nelson Arts Festival Pukapuka Talks.

.....
Friday 5 April, 12pm
Armstrong Room, Lake Wānaka Centre
\$25/\$15 Students
70 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by





Photographer credit: Vanessa Wu

Finally! A go-to for easy, delicious Chinese recipes for the Kiwi Kitchen – Nadia Lim

This book is a small glimpse into my life: the food I want to eat, the things I want to cook for my friends and family... Please – feast! – Sam Low

.....
Friday 5 April, 4pm
 Federal Diner, Wānaka
 \$30/\$15 Students
 60 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



MODERN CHINESE

From a childhood in Fiji to social media superstardom, **Sam Low** has fast become one of the most recognisable faces in contemporary New Zealand cooking since winning MasterChef NZ.

Sam joins us to share his new cookbook *Modern Chinese* where he demystifies modern Chinese cooking with a collection of accessible, easy recipes that can be cooked with ingredients from the supermarket. Sam will share insights into how to build your pantry of classic Chinese ingredients, setting the foundation for cooking.

Having grown up in a diasporic Chinese household, Sam creates recipes with a unique take on nostalgic traditional classics, while adding a new narrative to what it means to cook modern Chinese.

Sam will be in conversation with celebrated poet and playwright **Nathan Joe**.

AI VERSUS LIBRARIANS

Is artificial intelligence any match for the combined years of wisdom of our librarians? This session is a fun filled hour of human versus the machine, librarian vs AI. Audience members can ask a panel of librarians to recommend a personalised reading list to match their particular interests and tastes. ChatGPT will crunch the same interests to cough out its reading list. Which list will the audience prefer?

A partnership between Ōtautahi Tūrunga Library and Wānaka Library.

Originally presented at WORD Christchurch.

.....
Friday 5 April, 6pm
 Lake Wānaka Centre
 \$25/\$15 Students
 60 minutes, no interval





Lydia Bradey



Ruth Shaw



Julia Deans

Photographer credit Stephen Tilley



Alice Soper

CHANCING IT

Join this session of inspiring wāhine as they talk us through the time when they each took a chance on something and share with us how things turned out.

Local climber and the first woman to climb Mt Everest without oxygen **Lydia Bradey.**

Celebrated singer songwriter **Julia Deans.**

Journalist and advocate for women's sport **Alice Soper.**

Author of best-selling novel *The Bookseller at the End of the World* and owner of Two Wee Bookshops in Manapōuri, **Ruth Shaw.**

.....

Friday 5 April, 8pm

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

70 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by

**Aspiring
Law^{AS}**

BREAKFAST WITH PAPERS

The perfect start to your day kicks off at 9am at the Lake Wānaka Centre. Enjoy a coffee and a free newspaper as our panel discusses the news of the day. Join our panellists:

Paddy Gower - political journalist and National Correspondent for Newshub

Guyon Espiner - presenter and investigative journalist for RNZ

Susie Ferguson - award winning journalist and broadcaster for RNZ

Together they'll be discussing the big and small stories featuring in the news that day.

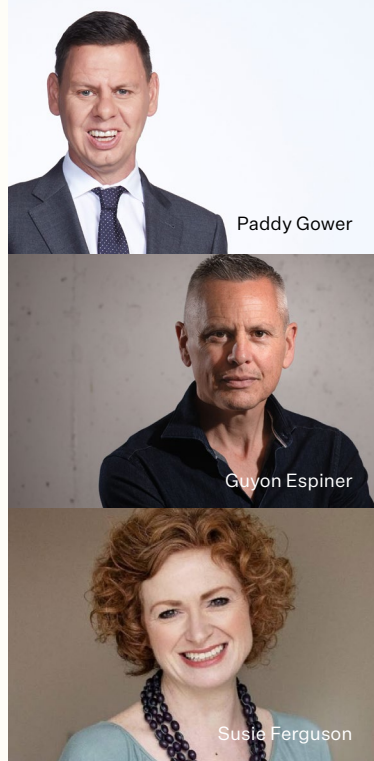
.....
Saturday 6 April 9am

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



Paddy Gower

Guyon Espiner

Susie Ferguson



KO KĀI TAHU ME TE TIRITI

In the autumn of 1840 seven Kāi Tahu raketira signed a copy of Te Tiriti o Waitangi at Ōnuku, Ruapuke Island, and Ōtākou. This paved the way for a series of major land purchases between 1844 and 1864 by which the Crown acquired more than half the landmass of New Zealand from its Kāi Tahu owners. However, Te Waipounamu as a place, and Kāi Tahu as a people, receive relatively little attention within general explanations of Te Tiriti.

Join kaimahi from the Ngāi Tahu Archive and representatives from the three marae nearest the Kāi Tahu signings to learn about how events in Te Waipounamu shaped those at Waitangi (and vice versa) before and since 1840.

.....
Mana Motuhake by Kāi Tahu master carver Fayne Robinson pays tribute to the Kāi Tahu signatories of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and symbolises the status of Kāi Tahu as a Treaty partner. Photograph by Kirk Hargreaves, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Collection, Ngāi Tahu Archive, 2022-0951

.....
Saturday 6 April, 11am

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



Te Rūnanga o **NGĀI TAHU**



Max Harris

SYNDROMES AND SURGERY, POLITICS AND PERSONAL

A former Rhodes Scholar and fellow of All Souls College Oxford, Max Harris now works in public law and progressive politics. In his mid-20's and again in his 30's, he unexpectedly encountered health challenges and his own mortality. This forced him to consider issues of loneliness, of care, and how we run our health system.

Max speaks of how experiences in hospitals and of healthcare can highlight insights about how we lead our lives in the twenty-first century.

.....
Saturday 6 April, 1pm

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

TRUTH AND LIES

How do we know what is true and how do we deal with the misinformation and disinformation that plagues not just social media, but public life.

Susie Ferguson has recently produced a podcast series called Undercurrents. **Kate Hannah** is the director of the Disinformation Project. **Byron C Clarke** is an expert on the far right and has just written *Fear: New Zealand's Hostile World of Extremists*. **Siouxie Wiles** is a science communicator who has been targeted by the alt right.

.....
Saturday 6 April, 3pm

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



Susie Ferguson

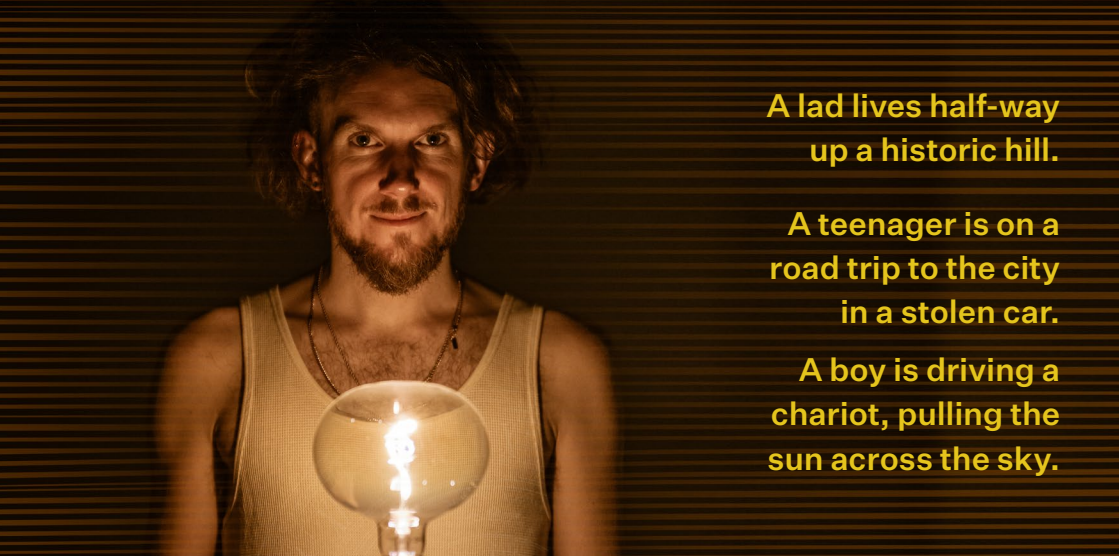
Kate Hannah

Siouxie Wiles

Byron C Clarke

Photo credit RNZ

Photographer credit
Avid Ericsson



**A lad lives half-way
up a historic hill.**

**A teenager is on a
road trip to the city
in a stolen car.**

**A boy is driving a
chariot, pulling the
sun across the sky.**

HELIOS

**Told by Alexander Wright with an epic cinematic score
by Phil Grainger.**

Award-winning “masters of storytelling”, Wright&Grainger bring from the UK their brand-new story about little things that leave big marks. A contemporary retelling of the ancient myth of HELIOS – the Sun and the fall of Phaeton.

Following on from their internationally-acclaimed productions of ORPHEUS (Best in Fringe, Dunedin Fringe 2019), EURYDICE (Best Theatre, Adelaide Fringe 2020) and Festival of Colour favourite THE GODS THE GODS THE GODS (Critics Circle Award, Adelaide Fringe 2023), join soaring performer Alexander Wright with his tape player and delicate tale to tell.

.....
Saturday 6 April, 6.30pm
Armstrong Room, Lake
Wānaka Centre
\$30/\$20 Students
70 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



This company truly are the best at storytelling - ThreeWeeks ★★★★★

Wright&Grainger have a beautiful gift for taking Ancient Greek stories and hauling them into the 21st century, translating the touching and keeping the human truth intact.

– The Wee Review (UK) ★★★★★

A magical, memorable, and stirring story ... Helios will have you laughing, crying and everything in between.

– Theatre Travels (UK/AUS)



Claire Keegan



Audrey McGee

QUINTESSENTIALLY IRISH

Irish writers are making a big impact on readers around the world. In this session Claire Mabey from Verb Festival holds a zoom discussion with two of Ireland's finest.

Claire Keegan's books are short and perfectly honed. She became an international best-seller with her novel, *Small Things Like These*, about a coal merchant whose eyes are opened one Christmas to the horror behind the walls of his biggest customer, a laundry run by nuns. Earlier novellas include *Foster* and *So Late in the Day*.

Audrey McGee's book *The Colony* was long-listed for the Booker Prize, and she has spoken about her admiration for New Zealand's first Booker winner – Keri Hulme. McGee's book is set on a remote island and explores the impact of two summer visitors – an English artist and a French language scholar – and of the violence in the north.

.....
Sunday 7 April, 9am

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

THE DRINKING GAME

Join **Guyon Espiner**, RNZ broadcaster and author of *The Drinking Game*, **Lotta Dan** (Mrs D) writer of three best-selling books about alcohol, and political journalist, documentary maker and National Correspondent for Newshub **Paddy Gower** as they discuss why the odds are stacked up against those who want to give up the booze.

In this session, each person will share their personal stories and the decision behind quitting the booze. With honesty and insight, they explore the reasons behind this shift, its impact on individuals, families, and communities, and the broader implications for our social values in New Zealand.

.....
Sunday 7 April, 11am

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



Paddy Gower



Lotta Dan



Guyon Espiner



Monique Kelly



Sophie Handford

WHAT IS THE TIPPING POINT?

Telling the stories and getting action on climate change

Climate change and the consequences for the planet can seem remote from our everyday lives until extraordinary weather hits us. Or until we realise changes – like the receding snow-line or the rising sea-level – are moving inexorably. So how do we communicate about global warming and what is the tipping point for getting political action?

Sophie Handford founded School Strike 4 Climate which mobilised 170,000 people across the country in 2019. She is now a Kāpiti councillor chairing the Strategy, Operations and Finance committee.

Monique Kelly worked for the International Labour Organisation before returning to NZ to co-found Revology and also Wao Aotearoa in Wānaka. Her focus is on action towards a thriving, low emissions future.

They will be joined on the panel by two senior students from Mt Aspiring College. We also expect to be announcing one further panellist.

.....

Sunday 7 April, 1pm

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$25/\$15 Students

60 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by

QUARTZ REEF
CENTRAL OTAGO

TOWER OF SONG

Adam McGrath, Julia Deans, Ebony Lamb and Grant Smithies

In 1988, Leonard Cohen wrote a famous ballad about the difficulties of songwriting, something he considered a “heroic enterprise.” He imagined himself tied to a table in the *Tower of Song*, struggling to write lyrics that might resonate long after he was dead. He pictured one of his own musical heroes, country star Hank Williams, marooned in the same lonely place, dealing with identical problems. How do you transform complex emotions into sound? How do you pluck the right words and melodies from the air to make a song worth making?

In this session, writer and broadcaster **Grant Smithies** will talk to three gifted New Zealand songwriters about their craft before they each sing a few of their favourites. We’ll find out what early experiences set **Adam McGrath, Ebony Lamb** and **Julia Deans** on the path towards this strange profession. Do they feel things more deeply than the rest of us? What are some of the stories behind their best-loved songs? And are they broke, given that hardly anyone actually buys songs anymore?

And we’ll celebrate the fact that, once a songwriter sets them free, great songs become a treasure shared by all, the meaning changing from person to person as the words and sounds stir up buried memories and set off different associations in every listener. Expect music, laughter and revealing conversation with three of this country’s most highly regarded singer songwriters.

.....
Sunday 7 April, 7.30pm

Lake Wānaka Centre

\$35/\$20 Students

70 minutes, no interval

Sponsored by



Ebony Lamb



Adam McGrath



Julia Deans



Grant Smithies

Photography credit Frances Carter

FESTIVAL CAFÉ & BOOKSHOP

Indulge your taste buds and get your coffee fix at the Festival Café, brought to us by Federal Diner and Fedeli, open during the Aspiring Conversations long weekend. Join us daily in the Armstrong Room from Friday through to Sunday. Meet up with friends, connect over good food and great conversation. Bar service available throughout the whole weekend.

The Paper Plus bookshop will also be set up for the duration of Aspiring Conversations.



In support of SUC (Single Use Cup) free Wānaka, we will be serving drinks in reusable cups or cans. Please bring your own cup if you wish to takeaway hot beverages. While we're on the subject of ways to look after our planet, think about where you can ride-share, bike or walk with friends to our events.

BECOME A CHAMPION of the Southern Lakes Arts Festival Trust

Enhance your Festival experience as a Festival Donor.

Join us for both the Wānaka Festival of Colour 2025 and Aspiring Conversations 2026, shaping the arts for the next two years. Your support goes beyond events, securing a future of arts and culture in our district, empowering young, local artists and ensuring inclusive, extraordinary experiences. Enjoy perks like priority booking and invitations to out of season events. Dive deeper into the festival world as a Benefactor or become part of our Creative Circle.

Contact us at: info@festivalofcolour.co.nz for more info or go to the supporter's page on our website.

We also welcome patron partnerships between two parties - families or friends.

**Champion the
arts and make
a difference!**

Information

Venues

Lake Wānaka Centre

89 Ardmore Street, Wānaka

Rhyme x Reason Brewery

17 Gordon Road, Wānaka

Federal Diner

47 Helwick Street, Wānaka

Booking

Book online: aspiringconversations.co.nz

For all ticketing queries please email ticketing@festivalofcolour.co.nz or phone **022 484 9669**

Priority booking

Benefactors, Patrons and Sponsors can book online from 7pm on Monday 29th January to 5pm Thursday 1st February.

General ticket sales start from 8.30am Friday 2nd February.

The Festival Box Office in the Lake Wānaka Centre will be open on Friday 2nd February from 8.30am to 2pm, for cash and Eftpos sales. Then daily from 9am Tuesday 2nd April through to the end of the Festival for any remaining sales.

The Aspiring Pass gives you access to an allocated seat in the seating block for all events excluding the following sessions, Dirty Passports, Modern Chinese, Tower of Song and Helios.

The pass is \$225 and can be booked online or by phone. There are a limited number available. The pass is non-transferable and needs to be shown at the door for all events. Your seat is guaranteed, but please do arrive 10 minutes early to access it easily.

Tickets to individual sessions are general admission seating in the flat floor, mezzanine and tiered block of the Lake Wānaka Centre auditorium where available. All other venues are general admission.

The ticket prices includes GST. A \$1.50 ticket booking/service fee and 3% credit card processing fee applies to all ticket purchases. Your tickets will be emailed to you to download to your mobile device for scanning at the venue. Student tickets require a valid Student Identification Card on entry to the session. View full booking conditions online.

Door Sales

Door sale allocations are available for shows not already sold out; these tickets will be on sale at the venue 30 minutes prior to sessions/performance.

Accessibility

Wheelchair access is available for all venues. For further information contact the festival office on 03 443 4172. If you require assistance to access a festival venue, please contact us in advance.

Companion seats

We'd like to support everyone who needs support in accessing festival events. Please let us know when you book if you require a companion seat alongside yours.

Service dogs are welcome at our festival venues.

Please let the box office staff know via email or phone if your service dog will be accompanying you when you book your ticket.

Health & Safety

The Festival is required to comply with the latest Government health advice at the time of the event. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of our community first and foremost. If a guest speaker gets sick and can no longer travel or participate, events may be postponed or cancelled. We will offer exchanges or refunds to our ticket holders in this instance.

Safe Space

The Festival is committed to providing a safe space for everyone. We have a zero tolerance for discriminatory and bullying behaviours.

The festival reserves the right to change and update the schedule, speakers or replace sessions. Any unavoidable changes will be advertised on the festival website, and through our social media channels. In the event of cancellation, the ticket price will be refunded. There will be no postponements. Transaction/service fees are non-refundable.

Sessions at a glance

More information about each session can be found on the page in the programme or on the website www.aspiringconversations.co.nz

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Aspiring Conversations is organised by the Southern Lakes Arts Festival Trust that also runs the biennial celebration of the arts - The Wānaka Festival of Colour. The next festival takes place 29 March - 6 April 2025.

If you like what you see here and would like to know more about supporting Aspiring Conversations or the Festival of Colour either as a volunteer, performer, sponsor or to make a donation then please get in touch today - info@festivalofcolour.co.nz.

We'd be delighted to hear from you.

Many thanks to our generous Patrons

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aspiringconversations.co.nz

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Wānaka Festival of Colour
29 March – 6 April 2025

Follow our socials for live updates



@Festivalofcolour
#Festivalofcolour

ASPIRING
CONVERSATIONS

Festival of Ideas & Kōrero