

Intermediate Years 7-8 Here's the Plan

Tuesday 13 May | Turei 13 Mei

DAY 1 TUESDAY 13 MAY | TUREI 13 MEI INTERMEDIATE YEARS 7 & 8, 10.00AM-2.45PM

Note: Doors will open at 9.30am and students will be ushered into their venues; the first sessions start promptly at 10.00am.

10.00am	-	10.45am	Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre	Anton Clifford-Motopi
10.55am	-	11.40am	Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre	Stacy Gregg
11.40am			Lunch & Book Signing	
12.30pm	-	1.15pm	Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre	Scotty Cotter
1.25pm	-	2.10pm	Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre	Jessica Townsend
2.10pm			Finish & Book Signing	

Workshops | Awheawhe

Workshops for Intermediate students run for one hour (numbers are 35 for each workshop; cost \$16 per student). These workshops provide students with a rare opportunity to learn from, and be inspired by, leading writers and illustrators. Please note that spaces fill quickly, and bookings are on a first-come, first-served basis. An initial limit of five students per school per workshop will apply. Additional students can be waitlisted, pending available space once bookings close.

Time	Workshop	Venue
9.40am-10.40am	James Russell	Waihorotiu Room
10.50am-11.50am	Michel Mulipola	Waihorotiu Room
1.25pm-2.25pm	Anton Clifford-Motopi	Waihorotiu Room

TRANSPORT FUND ENQUIRIES

Schools are encouraged to apply for grants towards travel costs to increase accessibility to the Schools Programme. Please find more information about the Schools Transport Fund on page 7, including the [link to the Application Form](#).

The deadline for applications is **5pm Friday 7 March 2025**. Any questions should be sent to schools@writersfestival.co.nz

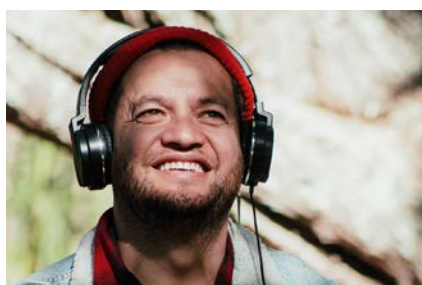
Intermediate Sessions: Years 7-8

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Finding Joy in the Journey ANTON CLIFFORD-MOTOPI

Sam thinks he's a weird-looking white kid with an afro. He lives with his white mum (annoying but not smelly) and brown dog Trevor (smelly but not annoying). He's never met his father; he just knows that he is black. That's until a surprise visit has Sam questioning who he really is. Author **Anton Clifford-Motopi** enjoys writing stories that make his readers laugh, and his cheeky book *To and Fro* draws from his own experiences growing up to explore themes of identity and belonging. Join Anton for a delightfully funny and thought-provoking session in which he delves into the challenges and joys of writing personal stories, and inspires students to write their own humorous tales.



Mauri Tau SCOTTY COTTER

As we draw closer to Matariki, we invite you on an innovative storytelling journey led by **Scotty Cotter** (Tainui, Ngāti Kahu, Fiji). A writer whose passion spans stage and screen, Scotty's work blends humour and heart, and often challenges conventions around Indigenous storytelling. In partnership with Silo Theatre, Scotty has created *Mauri Tau*, an immersive audio experience around Te Kāhui o Matariki (the star cluster of Matariki). In this interactive session, Scotty will introduce students to his playful and unique audio play that highlights the magic of theatre, and offers participants an opportunity to reflect on their whakapapa in relation to the stars and nature.

The complete audio recording of Mauri Tau will be available for purchase through Silo Theatre following the 2025 Auckland Writers Festival Waituhi o Tāmaki. We will provide further information at a later date.



Follow the Mystery STACY GREGG

Join **Stacy Gregg** (Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Pukeko, Ngāti Maru Hauraki), one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most internationally successful and locally awarded writers, in a session that will have you on the edge of your seat. Woven with suspense, *Nine Girls* takes place in Stacy's own hometown of Ngāruawāhia in the turbulent early 1980s and follows a young heroine's search for gold, whakapapa and the history of the land on which she stands. Stacy shares insights into her writing career and what inspired her to write her rich and page-turning novel.



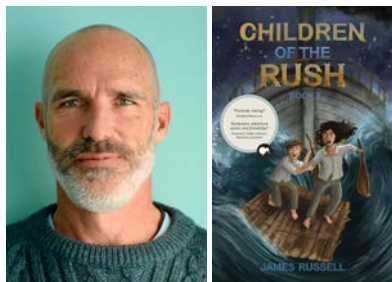
Creating Nevermoor JESSICA TOWNSEND

Readers across the world have been eagerly anticipating the fourth instalment of the highly acclaimed *Nevermoor* series. Hear from author **Jessica Townsend** as she discusses her new book *Silverborn: The Mystery of Morrigan Crow* and what awaits her leading character. In this new adventure, we will travel to places in Nevermoor that we have never seen before and meet people from Morrigan's past who will be vital in helping untangle the mystery of Morrigan's identity. Jessica shares her writing journey from the original creation of *Nevermoor*, and reveals how she continues to build the world and its inhabitants to create an absorbing and bestselling series.

Intermediate Workshops: Years 7-8

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Morning Workshops



Delight in the Detail

JAMES RUSSELL

9.40am-10.40am (max 35 students)

From imagining fantastical worlds where dragons need defending to local historical fiction, bestselling author **James Russell** knows how to write a captivating adventure story. For him, it's all in the detail. In this imaginative and interactive workshop, James will share his top writing tips and teach students how to flesh out the detail in their stories by using visual imagery and all five of their senses.

Afternoon Workshop



Humour is Power

ANTON CLIFFORD-MOTOPI

1.25pm-2.25pm (max 35 students)

Humour is a superpower that helps us talk about the hard things in life. This workshop, which explores the depth and power of humour, will provide practical tools to help you create your own comedic story. Author **Anton Clifford-Motopi** describes the different types of humour – slapstick, observational, wit and more – and shows you writing exercises to help you tackle serious topics with a light touch.



HOW TO CREATE A COMIC BOOK

MICHEL MULIPOLA

10.50am-11.50am (max 35 students)

Love comics and want to know the steps to create your own? Sāmoan comic book artist and pro wrestler **Michel Mulipola** will lead you through an engaging workshop that arms you with the tools to begin creating your own comic and tell a riveting story through illustrations and text. From working as a story artist on *Moana 2* and BOOM! Studios' line of *WWE* comics, Michel has all the experience to teach you how to hone your skills and craft a riveting comic book.

Intermediate Sessions: About the Authors

Anton Clifford-Motopi

Anton Clifford-Motopi writes funny stories for children that explore themes of identity, race, belonging, family relationships and friendship. He first became interested in writing for children while working as a high school teacher, but it would be many years before he put pencil to paper. Anton wrote three unpublished children's books while working as a university lecturer and raising four children. *To and Fro* was published in March 2024, the story, about a boy discovering his black identity, was shortlisted for The Readings Children's Book Prize. He divides his time between writing, delivering author talks and workshops, and working as a researcher in Indigenous health.

Jessica Townsend

Jessica Townsend lives on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. Her pet fascinations include public transport, ancient cities, hotels, opera singers, Halloween, secret societies and gigantic cats – all of which have weaseled their way into *Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow*, her award-winning first novel released in 2017. This record-breaking and *New York Times* bestselling series continues with *Wundersmith: The Calling of Morrigan Crow*, *Hollowpox: The Hunt for Morrigan Crow* and *Silverborn: The Mystery of Morrigan Crow*.

Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow was the biggest-selling Australian children's debut since records began and has won countless book awards.

Stacy Gregg

Stacy Gregg (Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Pukeko, Ngāti Maru Hauraki) grew up in Ngāruawāhia. Her essay about her hometown, *The Māoris From The Town Side of the River*, won a Voyager Media Award in 2023; her middle-grade novel *Nine Girls*, exploring similar themes, won the Margaret Mahy Book of the Year Award at the NZ Book Awards for Children and Young Adults in 2024. The undisputed queen of pony fiction and author of 39 titles, she remains HarperCollins NZ's third bestselling children's author of all time (after David Walliams and Dr Seuss). Her *Pony Club Secrets* series (totalling 13 books) sold more than 1.5 million copies globally in English alone and later became the CBBC TV series *Mystic*, which ran for three seasons.

Scotty Cotter

Scotty Cotter is a storyteller whose passion spans stage and screen. With more than 20 years of experience as an actor, he has brought diverse characters to life in theatre and on television. In the past decade, Scotty expanded into directing and writing, with notable credits including the TV series *Dead Ahead* and *Rule of Mum*, the project *Mauri Tau*, and the theatrical production *Neke*. Scotty's creative journey is driven by a desire to celebrate whakapapa, embrace the messy beauty of life, and connect with audiences in an honest and authentic way.

James Russell

James Russell is a much-loved children's author. Commuting on the train during a particularly damp month, Russell decided to write down some of the stories he had been telling his two young boys. Inspired by the enthusiastic reaction of his sons, Russell developed his stories into the *Dragon Brothers Trilogy*, a series for 3–7 year olds; the three rhyming-verse stories became a bestselling trilogy. That series developed into his five-book series *The Dragon Defenders*, which has sold more than 130,000 copies and been translated into multiple languages. Russell's historical junior fiction trilogy *Children of the Rush* has won Storylines Notable Book Awards, and book one was a finalist in the New Zealand Book Awards for Children and Young Adults and The NZ Booklovers Awards.

Michel Mulipola

Michel Mulipola is a Sāmoan comic book artist, illustrator, pro wrestler, gamer, radio personality and activist based in Māngere, South Auckland. He worked as a story artist and cultural consultant on Disney's animated film *Moana 2*. Other featured clients include Ubisoft and the WWE. Michel co-created the first-ever Sāmoan language comic, *O Le Aiga Sāmoa*, with his Sāmoan language tutor, Nafanuatele Mafaufau Peters, in 2021. As a pro wrestler, he has been NZ Heavyweight Champion and multiple Aotearoa NZ Tag Team Champion. You can listen to him every Friday morning on ABC Pacific radio show *Nesia Daily*, as the pop-culture expert for *The Pop Off* segment. Michel also travels the country visiting schools in different regions as an advocate for reading and the arts.