

RAWWA

READERS AND WRITERS AKAROA

6-8 March 2026 Programme

Friday 6 March

The Boatshed, Akaroa

[10am - 5pm Storytelling for Film - A Bootcamp](#)

with Michael Bennett

Akaroa Area School

10am - 3pm Inspiring Young Readers and Writers

with Gavin Bishop and Ross Calman

The Madeira Hotel, Akaroa

8pm Open Mic Poetry Night - All Welcome

hosted by Ray Shipley

Saturday 7th March

Gaiety Hall

8.30-9am - Registration

9-10.30am Mihi whakatau and Welcome

Festival Opening - Story-telling by Word, Image and Song

Ariana Tikao, Michael Bennett and Ross Calman

10.30-11am morning tea

11-12pm Fiction and the Lives of Others

Damien Wilkins in conversation with Kate de Goldi

12-1pm Lunch break

| Gaiety Hall | Matariki Centre 3 | Parallel Workshops |
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| <p><u>1-2.45pm Poetry makes nothing happen – should it?</u> Ariana Tikao, Isla Huia, Ray Shipley and Nic Low, chaired by Joanna Preston</p> | <p><u>1-1.45pm Stories of the Peninsula</u> Lou and Ant Bentley, John Curry and Marie Connolly in conversation with Morrin Rout</p> | <p><u>1-2.45pm The Memoir</u> with Joe Bennett</p> |
| | <p><u>2-2.45pm Meeting the Ancestor on the Road: personal, cultural and historical essays</u> Tina Makereti with Jane Stafford</p> | <p><u>1-2.45pm Short Fiction to Die For</u> with Vanda Symon</p> |
| | | <p><u>1-2.45pm The Craft of Fiction</u> with Damien Wilkins</p> |

2.45-3.15pm afternoon tea

| Gaiety Hall | Matariki Centre 3 |
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| <p><u>3.15-4pm The South Island novels of Laurence Fearnley</u> Laurence Fearnley in conversation with Jane Stafford</p> | <p><u>3.15-4pm Driving New Zealand's Organic Movement - the life of Bob Crowder</u> Matt Morris in conversation with Robyn Peers</p> |

Gaiety Hall

4.15-5pm This Writing Life
Joe Bennett

5.15-6pm RAWA's Crime Award Finalists

| Crime Book Club - Matariki 1 | Crime Book Club - Matariki 2 | Crime Book Club - Matariki 3 |
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| Michael Bennett, <i>Carved in Blood</i> | Vanda Symon, <i>Prey</i> | Liam McIlvanney, <i>The Good Father</i> |

7pm - Festival dinner at The Gaiety Hall

Dinner Speaker: Steve Braunias!

Sunday 8 March

Gaiety Hall

9.30-10.30am Keynote

Awe: the miraculous and mysterious in writing - Tina Makereti

10.30-11am morning tea

11-12pm Lives of Crime

Vanda Symon and Liam McIlvanney in conversation with Kate de Goldi

12-1pm Lunch break

| Gaiety Hall | Matariki Centre 3 | Parallel workshops |
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| <p><u>1-1.45pm Mountain Writing: The Pleasure of Researching and Editing an Anthology</u> Laurence Fearnley, chaired by Morrin Rout</p> | <p><u>1-1.45pm New Novels, New Conversations</u> Coleen Clare, Stef Harris and Heather McQuillan in conversation with Robyn Peers</p> | <p><u>1-2.45pm Sonnets will not Bite You</u> Joanna Preston</p> <p><u>1-2.45pm Generating Sharp Fictional Prose</u> Josiah Morgan</p> |
| <p><u>2-2.45pm Te Araroa from South to North</u> Naomi Arnold in conversation with Liana Ashenden</p> | <p><u>2-2.45pm Southern Tales</u> Owen Marshall and Dan Smith in conversation with Jane Stafford</p> | <p><u>1-2.45pm The Story is Wiser Than Us</u> Tina Makereti</p> |

2.45-3.15pm afternoon tea

| Gaiety Hall | Matariki Centre 3 |
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| <p><u>3.15-4pm Mountain Ranging</u> Andy Buchanan and Nic Low in conversation with Morrin Rout</p> | <p><u>3.15-4pm Submitting work for publication</u> Isla Huia and Josiah Morgan</p> |

Gaiety Hall

4.15-4.45pm RAWA 2026 Awards, presented by Owen Marshall

4.45-5.30pm Closing Address:

Readers and Writers in Aotearoa - Are we in good heart?

Kate de Goldi