

RAWA

READERS AND WRITERS AKAROA

6-8 March 2026 Programme

Friday 6 March

Matariki Center, Akaroa School

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, Ross Calman and Nic Low

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

2.45-3.15pm afternoon tea

Gaiety Hall	Matariki Centre 3
<u>3.15-4pm The South Island novels of Laurence Fearnley</u> Laurence Fearnley in conversation with Jane Stafford	<u>3.15-4pm Driving New Zealand's Organic Movement - the life of Bob Crowder</u> Matt Morris in conversation with Robyn Peers
Gaiety Hall 4.15-5pm This Writing Life Joe Bennett	

5.15-6pm RAWA's CRIME BOOK CLUBS

Matariki 1	Matariki 2	Matariki 3
Michael Bennett , <i>Carved in Blood</i> facilitated by Steph Walker	Vanda Symon , <i>Prey</i> facilitated by Fee Jay	Liam McIlvanney , <i>The Good Father</i> facilitated by Marie Connolly

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

2.45-3.15pm afternoon tea

Gaiety Hall	Matariki Centre 3
<u>3.15-4pm Mountain Ranging</u> Andy Buchanan and Nic Low in conversation with Morrin Rout	<u>3.15-4pm Submitting work for publication</u> Isla Huia and Josiah Morgan
Gaiety Hall	
4.15-4.45pm RAWA 2026 Awards , introduced by Melanie Dixon and presented by Owen Marshall	
4.45-5.15pm Closing Address: Readers and Writers in Aotearoa - Are we in good heart? Kate de Goldi	