

Central Queensland University and independent scholar-writers

Regina (Ineke) Acton, Zoe Allen, Vivianne Barry, Zela Bissett, Janet Blake, Donna Lee Brien, Sue Davis, Matt Eliot, Catherine Gamble, Vanessa Gregory, Pam Miller, Kathie Roberts, Irene Waters, Libby Woodhouse and Lucy Yule

At land's edge: three collaborative poems

Biographical notes:

Regina (Ineke) Acton is an educational consultant who produces creative writing and visual art works.

Zoe Allen, has experience in human relations and event management, is studying a Bachelor of Business and works at CQUniversity, Noosa.

Vivianne Barry, Executive Producer of TEDx Noosa, works with businesses to drive operational innovation and improvement.

Zela Bissett is a writer and teacher who fosters an appreciation for the arts and arts production in young people.

Janet Blake is an author, artist and President and board member of several global non-profit organisations, and is studying in an MBA program.

Donna Lee Brien is Professor of Creative Industries at Central Queensland University, where she leads the Creative Arts Research Group.

Dr Susan Davis is Senior Lecturer at Central Queensland University and a researcher with extensive experience as a director and writer of theatrical scripts.

Corinne Deering is a writer and an artist based in Noosa, Queensland.

Dr Matt Eliot holds a PhD in Human Centered Design and Engineering and is a senior academic at Central Queensland University.

Catherine Gamble has a Graduate Certificate of Creative Industries (Creative Practice) and exhibited a portfolio of her creative work at the CQUniversity Art Space in 2014.

Vanessa Gregory lives and works on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

Pamela Miller has taught for 40 years. She holds a Master of Letters in Visual Arts and Design and a Master of Education.

Kathie Roberts moved from New Zealand to Noosa two years ago, where she is developing her writing.

Irene Waters, a research higher degree candidate at Central Queensland University, has been published in the anthology *Eavesdropping* (2012) and in *Idiom23* (2013, 2014).

Libby Woodhouse is a senior radiographer with Breastscreen, and has creative and research interests in writing and women's health.

Lucy Yule is an emerging writer.

Keywords:

Creative writing – collaborative poetry – collaboration

At land's edge, I

Drove international visitors to the National Park
to see the kiosk
only to be surrounded by massive goannas.

The environment
of the Noosa River mouth
is hostile –
yet people control how they interact with it.

An empty beach
fills my soul
with calm and peace and awe.

The community envelops our family,
cloaking us with welcome.

Sitting in a café
sun setting
glasses clinking
dogs running along the beach
people laughing,
and me,
not wanting to leave.

Cocooned
awake, alive
in tingling, sparking flow.
Unplugged,
elastic time,
on fire,
Surfing the edge
of magic.

Exhilarated
riding the sparking waters,
the kite
flying above.

The whirling carnival
of lorikeets overhead,
cascading blossoms of
jacarandah and hibiscus.
I open fully to the river, and
find
my home.

At land's edge, II

We left the continental shelf
with the *Nghai Tahu*
in the capable hands of Captain Maru
descendant of the master navigators
of Polynesia.

They warned us we would be sick
as the great catamaran
plummeted into the open ocean
where
in the deep rich trenches
young sperm whales
fed voraciously,
building their massive bodies.

The horizon line,
unbending, steady,
dark.
Moving down the picture plane,
the turquoise green slides in,
softening the blue,
blending, fragmenting it.

The two turtles appear, tiny at first.
They are coming closer
frolicking, diving, weaving together.
A taste of freedom
then they are gone.
The horizon is still there,
straight, unbending, solid and steady.

I lift my face to the sun.
Poised at the edge,
alone at Hell's Gate.
Seems the wrong name for a place
of such beauty.
A beckoning invitation whispers.
Reach up.
Reach out.
Touch infinity.
One step closer
is all it will take.
Take flight.

At land's edge, III

Seven months pregnant
and the search is over.
I have found home
on the edge
of Lake MacDonald.

I drove here at dawn
following some unknown urge.
Stumbled down an overgrown track.
Past a For Sale sign.
Birdsong and mist.
I know this is the place.

The expanse of white pristine sand
stretches invitingly
as far as the eye
can see.
I breathe in the salty air
and join
in the infectious joy
of my dog as
we run free.

Waves thrashing
like clothes in a washing machine.
Diving down deep
grabbing breaths.
Frolicking with him,
without a care in the world.

Now old, the dog
walks into the water
letting it lap over his abdomen
oblivious to the
rays and fish.
His mouth hangs open,
just slightly,
making him look
both like a puffer fish
and a demented friend.

Pelicans drift aimlessly,
black crows circle,
seagulls chase scraps.
Squawk, peck and fight.
Parrots screech.
Kookaburras sing in the dusk.

The sun sets,
quickly.
I start to shiver.
In the quietness of the night and
and the candle-lit picnic table
I hug myself
and simply listen.

Research statement

Research background

In 2015, building on previous research into creativity and memory (Sacks 2006), how writers join fragments of knowledge into new understandings (John-Steiner 1997) and collaborative creative writing (Anderson et al. 2014), two research writing workshops were held to investigate developing collaborative poetry based on personal memories and a writer's sense of place.

Research contribution

Three collaborative poems were developed and edited. These outputs exemplify how the melding of individual voices offers a dynamism that may not always be achieved by solo writers. Sharing this technique to facilitate both individual and collaborative investigation and writing also resists the sometimes overwhelming nature of working in solitude (Doherty 2009) and the competitive nature of research evaluation (Brien 2007).

Research significance

This research has resulted in an invited public performance in a publically-funded creative venue (Noosa Regional Gallery 2015) and peer refereed publication in a leading, quality journal of creative writing.

Works cited

Anderson et al. 2014 'Collaborative scholarly creative writing: two poems' *TEXT* Special issue 27, at <http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue27/Various.pdf> (accessed 9 May 2015)

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