

STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND

# MEDIA RELEASE

30 May 2023

## **Supernatural crime and poetry win black&write! Fellowships**

A crime thriller about a demon-hunting detective and a poetry collection interrogating history, colonialism, and trauma will be produced by First Nations writers as part of the black&write! Fellowships.

The 2023 winners will accept their awards at a State Library of Queensland ceremony this afternoon.

Emerging poet Dakota Feirer, who is based in Dharawal and Yuin Country (Wollongong), and author Jacob K Gallagher, who is based in Ngunnawal Country (Canberra), will each receive \$10,000 fellowships.

Dakota Feirer is a Bundjalung and Gumbaynggirr man whose winning work, 'Arsenic Flower', is a contemplative mosaic of poetry and prose.

'Arsenic Flower' features love poems to people and Country, eulogies to landscapes and letters of heartache to ancestors, building a detailed picture of life's beautiful tragedies.

Dakota is a writer, researcher and educator who has been published by *Australian Poetry*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, *Overland Literary Journal*, *Red Room Poetry* and *Art Monthly Australasia*.

Jacob is a Kamilaroi man born in Gunnedah (NSW). His adult fiction manuscript 'The Doubles' is a compelling supernatural crime story set in the Liverpool Plains region of rural New South Wales.

Jacob's story follows a hard-boiled detective specialising in demon hunting, as she investigates a string of deaths in the region.

The winners will receive prize money, manuscript development with State Library's black&write! editors and a publication opportunity with Hachette Australia.

The black&write! Fellowships are open to all writers (published and unpublished) of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent currently living in Australia. The fellowships are open to adult fiction, young adult fiction, short story collection, poetry collection and children's book manuscripts.

black&write! is supported by the Australian Government, through the Australia Council for the Arts, Copyright Agency's Cultural Fund and Fellowships publishing partner Hachette Australia.

### **Quotes from Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch:**

"The black&write! Fellowships have provided First Nations writers with an important platform to develop and publish works, grow careers and reach new audiences for more than 10 years.



**Media enquiries**  
State Library Communications team  
[media@slq.qld.gov.au](mailto:media@slq.qld.gov.au)  
(07) 3840 7897

Interviews are available upon request.

“Congratulations to this year’s black&write! Fellowship winners, Dakota Feirer, and Jacob K Gallagher, recognising their wonderful words, stories and diverse talents which strengthen the connections of the rich knowledge and cultures of First Nations peoples.

“I look forward to following their promising careers, now broadened with the opportunities offered by this fellowship. As we embark on our Path to Treaty, initiatives like black&write! will play an increasingly significant role in elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait storytellers and perspectives.

“The Palaszczuk Government supports the State Library of Queensland to elevate First Nations arts, share our stories and celebrate our story tellers as key priorities of our 10-year strategy Creative Together.”

### **Quotes from State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald AM:**

“For 12 years, black&write! has been making its mark on the Australian literary scene, introducing the world to new and exciting First Nations writers.

“State Library is committed to respectful processes of truth-telling and having a First Nations-led writing and editorial practice is an important part of this process.

“We are proud of the black&write! alumni who are carving out a strong path for a whole new generation of aspiring First Nations storytellers. Past Fellows include Claire G. Coleman, Ali Cobby-Eckermann, Sue McPherson, Lystra Rose, Jared Thomas and Alison Whittaker.”

### **Quotes from 2023 black&write! Fellow, Dakota Feirer:**

“There are many storytellers of our past and present out there who have contributed to the conscious body of Blak art and literature. They have done so much for me and my life and have saved me in more ways than one.

“Winning a black&write! Fellowship means an opportunity to be a part of the same canon. This gives me purpose, pride and belonging. I can feel part of the picture now. And the stories I have to tell can be seen, held, shared and felt by those who need them.”

### **Quotes from 2023 black&write! Fellow, Jacob K Gallagher:**

“The feeling of sharing my writing is a terrifying but rewarding experience, and one I’ve been chasing since the first time a teacher encouraged me to read out my writing to the class.

“I feel my writing and my identity as a Kamilaroi man are being recognised and validated by the community, even as I’m still finding my feet in it, and it feels like the stories I want to tell are worth telling.”

More information: [black&write!](#)  
[Media kit](#)



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