



For immediate release – January 7, 2009

READER'S FEAST ◊ WRITERS AT THE CONVENT  
February 13, 14 & 15 2009

This year's *Reader's Feast ◊ Writers at the Convent*, Melbourne's summer celebration of reading, writing, books and ideas will be looking at subjects as diverse as Melbourne's iconic food culture, the politics of the Middle East, climate change, life-changing travel, dysfunctional families, exciting new fiction, cartoons, writing for children and popular science.

Held in the magnificent Abbotsford Convent, *Reader's Feast ◊ Writers at the Convent*, will open on Friday, February 13 with a special treat – a double bill featuring EG's The Naked Man, a.k.a a crime writer **Robert Gott**, live on stage and a special audience with The Modern Guru himself, comedian, writer and safe of the suburbs, **Danny Katz**.

The entertaining and challenging conversations which are the hallmark of *Reader's Feast ◊ Writers at the Convent* continue over the weekend with guests including cartoonists **Michael Leunig** and **Bruce Petty**; popular New Zealand novelist, **Jenny Patrick**; first time novelist, **Jacinta Halloran**, commentator on Middle East affairs, **Peter Rodgers**; and Scottish author, **Alison Whitelock** who takes readers on a humorous romp through her dysfunctional family;

As well, there will be some of Australia's favourite novelists including **Sonia Hartnett**, **Robert Drewe**, **Peter Goldsworthy**, **Steven Carroll**, **Steven Conté** and **Anthony O'Neill**; foodie **Charmaine O'Brien** will reveal the flavours of Melbourne; and veteran Australian songwriter **Neil Murray** who gave us the anthem for the Sydney Olympics, *My Island Home*, will discuss his work and perform.

*Reader's Feast ◊ Writers at the Convent* will also mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of publication of his *Origin of the Species*, the book that sparked an intellectual, social and spiritual revolution with special presentations by some of the world's most respected evolutionists: Darwinian philosopher **Michael Ruse**, USA palaeontologist **Robert Bakker**, climate change expert **Stephan Faris** from the USA and Italy, evolutionists **Geoffrey Miller** and **Malcolm Water** and anthropologist **Jonathan Marks**.

*Reader's Feast ◊ Writers at the Convent* is held at the Abbotsford Convent on February 13, 14 & 15. Tickets prices are \$17/\$15 with discounts for multiple purchases and are available through the CUB Malthouse Box Office from January 19 – (03) 9685 5111 or [www.malthousetheatre.com.au](http://www.malthousetheatre.com.au)

Media enquiries to the festival publicist Shirley Hardy-Rix  
(03) 9842 9740 or 0412 057288  
[shirley@hardyrix.com.au](mailto:shirley@hardyrix.com.au)

General public enquiries to Reader's Feast Bookstore  
(03) 9662 4699  
[www.writersattheconvent.com](http://www.writersattheconvent.com)