



FRINGEFEED | 23 JAN 2020

Bush Poetry on The Swan



“Colin and me, and Barry makes three, and we’re here for an hour of bush poet...ry.”

So begins Bush Poetry on the Swan: a raucous evening of charming bush fun, cruising in syncopation on the sunset Swan River.

Presented by the WA Bush Poets and Yarnspinners—a community group of local poets and performers, fiercely committed to entertainment—Bush Poetry is a gorgeous, charming, utterly enjoyable evening of true-blue Aussie lyric storytelling.

From Banjo Patterson to Barry Humphries to original work from the performing poets themselves, the works read as The Crystal Swan cruiser sailed down the Swan River were charming, upbeat, and entertaining.

We heard an ode to the lamington, a sober imagining of life at Gallipoli, a wry missive about the GST, and a couple of crudely funny ditties about fornication and defecation (“Mine’s a bit rubbishy, but people like laughing at rubbish”, announced poet Rob before starting a short poem about a sheep—that may have tended sexual).

With that brief warning, I’d unhesitatingly recommend you go, and to take your mother: it’s not an inappropriate evening by any means, and the touching, resonant reflections on Australian life last century had one septuagenarian in the front row in tears.

These are stories for folk who have been around a lot longer than most of have.

I'd incorrectly assumed an evening of bush poetry and yarning to focus on Indigenous voices, perhaps contemporary poets; tonight, our bush poets established themselves firmly in the turn-of-the-century drovers-and-shearers of Henry Lawson's and Banjo Patterson's sun-scorched stories.

The beating heart of Australian bush stories pulses beneath the evening, making the riverside setting all the more special—the sparkling water turning into view as the cubic Crystal Swan shifted out of its pen offered a deeply significant and special backing to poems grounded in the roughness and resilience of Australian bush life.

Poets will change for the next Bush Poetry outing: expect Kalgoorlie's Paul Browning, poetry champion Christine Boulton, and the 101-year-old local legend, Arthur Leggett.

Charming, delightful and utterly entertaining, Bush Poetry on the Swan is a wonderful evening out.

SHARE THIS REVIEW



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



SOPHIE RAYNOR

Sophie is a reader and writer interested in politics, Southeast Asia and fermented foods. A former Scoop Magazine staff writer and Great about Perth blogger, she's recently returned home to Perth after two years living in tropical Timor-Leste. She writes freelance articles, manages not-for-profit communications, tweets @raynorsophie and freckles easily.

VIEW COMMENTS

SHOW DETAILS +

BUY TICKETS

