

**PAUL KELLY: LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH**

Tuesday 8 December 2020, 7pm

online (Zoom)

Presented by Melbourne Recital Centre

**SPEAKERS**

Paul Kelly anthologist/speaker

Jaclyn Crupi moderator

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

Paul Kelly has never studied or taught poetry. He's an amateur following his nose. He's of the belief that poetry is friendlier than we might think - nothing to be intimidated by. It is, as Paul points out in a beautifully written foreword, all around us: in the pop songs that can be heard everywhere we work, shop and play; quoted on ritual occasions such as weddings and funerals; and even in our everyday speech though we may be unaware of it - 'it's neither here nor there'... 'tongue-tied'... 'cold comfort' ... 'vanished into thin air' - these phrases all sprang from Shakespeare's plays which, for the most part, were written in 10-syllable lines of verse. *Love is Strong as Death* is Paul Kelly's selection of favourite poems ranging from Shakespearean sonnets to contemporary verse, from works by Australian poets to translated literature, and from pithy one-liners to excerpts from epic narratives. In this wide-ranging and deeply moving anthology, Paul encourages readers to pick poems up and pass them on, to memorise them for fun and to use his selection as a starting point for new discoveries. The common thread uniting these varied verses is that they all speak to two of literature's great themes that have proven so powerful in Paul Kelly's music: love and death - and everything in between.

'Poetry is deep play. It's comfort. It's challenge. Just like a friend. To be approached any time, any way. Day or night. In a light mood or dark.' Paul Kelly

**IN THE PRESS**

'Kelly swims in an ocean of words. He loves them. This is surely a huge part of his genius as a songwriter. It also makes this anthology such a wonderful experience. Many of the poems will be familiar, many of them won't be. But these words all contribute to a sense of a life beyond words.'  
*The Sydney Morning Herald*

'Buy this book of riches and give it to the people you love. Then nag them to learn some of these poems by heart, and learn some yourself. ('By heart': what a revealing expression.) If you find yourself in a terrible situation, if you get arrested or your lover leaves or the car breaks down or the fire traps you or you must sit patiently waiting in the emergency ward for news, poetry remembered and recited can lift you up and away, out of the murk to better times.'  
*Australian Book Review*

**ABOUT THE SPEAKERS**

Paul Kelly is recognised as one of the most significant songwriters in the country. As well as issuing an enduring body of work both solo and with his bands, encompassing over 350 songs, Kelly has written film scores (*Lantana* and *Jindabyne*) and collaborated with some of the finest artists in Australia and New Zealand. His prose has appeared in *Meanjin*, *The Monthly*, *Rolling Stone* and *The Age*, and his first book, *How to Make Gravy*, was published in 2010.

Jaclyn Crupi has worked in publishing and bookselling since 2002. She is a bookseller and event host at Hill of Content and a book editor. Jaclyn was a judge for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards in 2018 (Fiction) and 2019 (Unpublished Manuscript). She has written several books for children and her first book for adults, *Nonna Knows Best*, was recently published.

*Melbourne Recital Centre acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work, live and learn. We pay our respects to the people of the Kulin nation, their Elders past, present and emerging and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.*

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