

## EDITORIAL — ISSUE 2

When entities are placed into adjacency, it's often unsurprising that curious resonances are set up, begin to hum, and create new relationalities not foreseen or even curated in advance. For each issue of *c i n d e r*—a scholarly journal that seeks to provide a forum for emerging scholars in creative writing and related areas (that is: current Higher Degree students, Honours students, and early career researchers, up to two years beyond submission)—we delight in approaching a creative writer for a piece of work of their choice as a feature piece. In this issue, we have the gobsmacking, and (deceptively) modestly-titled 'A Feather', by Debra Dank. Lulling the reader with its almost crooning and quasi-nostalgic use of second person, this piece—as *c i n d e r* co-editor Sue Joseph remarked upon reading—'is haunting and quite beautiful, and awful, all at the same time. I felt like I was holding my breath...'

Finding new ways to *say* the world, to express the world or *our worlds* (that are always multiple, personal, communal, eternal and fleeting), not just to make objective propositions about them, but also to somehow share its more secret atmospheres, its complexities that disobey both conventional logics and habitual anticipations, as well as its emergent truths and events, is what creative writing often seeks to do. This aspect of the practice of writing and the *evental* mists (to borrow from the Deleuze of *The Logic of Sense*) that rise up around our endeavours in shaping letters and words on a page/screen are not to be taken for granted, as any writer who has a serious engagement with their craft knows. What our works *express* always exceeds *and* falls short of the intentions and expectations we have for them—at the same time less *and* much more. There is something unfathomable about our craft, and this is also the lure that keeps us making—imperfectly, startlingly, humbly, virtuosically. We shock ourselves by that with which we appear involved in producing.

Dank's piece with its intimations of shame and the intensities of family violence, as well as childhood perception and the clear seeing of the artist, leads us in this issue to the five articles we proudly present to you. We see a theme emerging across the works—this resonance I was speaking of—relating to the ethics of telling, seeing and responding. Luft's paper takes us to the fictional representation by author Annie Proulx of Newfoundland (which for me has indeed become mythical, as a Proulx fan who returns to this work often) querying—in the face of the work's fame—the impact of this fictionalisation on the place itself. What does it mean for a newspaper, *The Gammy Bird*, to be represented in its work of representing via journalism, a community that continues to live and change and re-see itself?

On this note of seeing, of being able to see (what is in plain sight, what lies in the shadows), Gabrielle Ryan addresses a related question of the capacity of an often-maligned genre—the Gothic—for serving the needs of *saying* and giving expression to a marginalised and silenced past. In her article, we see how a genre that traditionally had to resolve in each denouement the reader's unsettlement as part of its conventions may be repurposed to hold open marginalised histories and to subvert the dominant versions that have for so long seemed the whole story, albeit ones that are 'haunted' by that which they silence. Not at all 'supernatural' mysteries, the latter constitute instead

material and visceral oppressions which deserve to be unearthed and spoken. Fiction can be the writing practice which looks for the unsaid gaps and brings the imagination to bear on these, ethically, tenaciously and cautiously.

In terms of the ethics of the scopic, of images and self-representation, Tess Scholfield-Peters tackles a sensitive and emergent area of concern regarding the shifting contours of what can be called ‘empathy’ with regards to dark tourism, specifically in relation to sites of holocaust atrocity. Questioning whether it still counts as empathy to be motivated by being *seen-to-feel* as opposed to going through an (unwitnessed) ordeal of facing history’s facts and horrors, I read Scholfield-Peters’ article as asking us to consider our own practices of self-representing, especially in instances when what might be signified are “feelings” that we’ve sought to provoke via encounters that allow us to be voyeurs to others’ present or past sufferings. It is a complex area and one that will not go away in a historical moment that’s having a wild love affair with generating images of the self and its experience.

Lennox’s paper takes us in another direction in terms of the ethics of saying and of telling about others—namely, the scientific telling about dingoes who live in community on K’gari (Fraser Island). Linking the process of the autopsy—following the execution of dingoes who contravene behaviours deemed ‘safe’—to practices of domination and sovereignty which involve an all-seeing, protected from being seen (after Derrida), Lennox makes a plea for allowing space for other ways of telling about dingoes and their choices of behaviour in relation to human visitors to their place. Reading her paper, I find Lennox reminding us that our species-ism locks the other, in this case the living, changing persons of dingoes, into behavioural templates that we never apply so crisply to ourselves. Humans are allowed to be interested and not interested in fellow humans. Our stance towards sociability changes and does not define us in any moment. Drawing on works of a similar ilk by Macdonald and Lopez, Lennox asks us to take stock of the power that our tellings have to do subtle and less-subtle violences to our fellow creatures. Finally, Caulfield’s article addresses creative practice in the shape of fictional biographical work asking about the scope a writer may allow herself when rigorously transforming always-incomplete archival materials into strong fictional productions. Using her most recent project as a case study, Caulfield steps us through some crucial concerns relevant to any writer of biographical literary fiction who wishes to do justice to their subject rigorously, as well as heeding the demands of their craft and the desires of their reader more broadly.

We hope you find much to ponder, enjoy and contest in this second issue of *c i n d e r*. We are grateful for the close work of Bonnee Crawford and Eileen Herbert-Goodall, for editing and proofing advice. We would also like to thank (profusely!) our anonymous referees for their dedication and generosity. They offered an array of insightful and supportive suggestions to the writers of these articles, and we are even more cognisant of this work, in a moment when peer-reviewing is often under-acknowledged by the very institutions that benefit from its labour. Thank you to all of these people working quietly in the background—thought, creativity, resistance and clear thinking rely on our continued acts of so-called non-utilitarian behaviour.

—Antonia Pont (with Hayley Elliott-Ryan & Sue Joseph)