Down the Rabbit Hole: 
A festival of bold childhood ideas 

Friday 29th April 2016 
8.45am – 4.15pm 

Domain Theatre 
Art Gallery of NSW 
Art Gallery Road, Sydney 

Conference Agenda
Event Description

This conference is for the adventurous, the curious and the thinkers. Be prepared to:

- Be invigorated, motivated, challenged and inspired to question and deliberate
- Feel unsettled and be taken out of your comfort zone
- Have your mind and senses awakened to ideas that are multi-dimensional.

The conference is aimed at those people working in the early and middle childhood field:

- Educational Leaders
- Team Leaders
- Directors and Nominated Supervisors
- Managers
- Executive staff
- Approved Providers
- School Principals.

The speakers at this conference will present many different viewpoints in order to challenge conference delegates and stimulate conversation. Please note that Gowrie NSW does not claim responsibility for the viewpoints of each speaker but encourages delegates to be inspired to think differently.

"You used to be much more..."muchier". You’ve lost your muchiness."
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
About Gowrie NSW

A leader in early childhood for 75 years, Gowrie NSW provides diverse child care, family support and professional development services.

Gowrie creates happy, safe and nurturing experiences for children through quality education and care centres including:

- Three early childhood centres within Sydney
- Three outside school hours and vacation care centres.
- Specialist crèches that provide child care for newly arrived migrants undertaking AMEP English classes at partner institutions in the Illawarra and Hunter regions, under the Adult Migrant English Program.
- In 2015/16 Gowrie NSW will open an early childhood centre in Mudgee.

Gowrie NSW also provides professional development and consultancy services to the early childhood and middle childhood sector, information and referral services for families and early childhood professionals, and consultancy services to corporate organisations to help them meet the child care needs of their employees.

Gowrie NSW receives federal funding to deliver a number of programs through the Inclusion Professional Support Unit including the Inclusion Support Agency (ISA), an Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU). Gowrie NSW also receives federal funding to provide care for the children of those enrolled in the Adult Migrant English Program.

Recognising the importance of supporting the whole family, Gowrie NSW runs a parent series to engage, inspire and inform parents, presents on early childhood to parents in corporations and is funded through the State government to run the Child and Family Information Line.

As a knowledge leader in the sector, Gowrie values research as a basis for the development of all programs.
Agenda

8.45am  Registration

9.15am  Opening
   Welcome to Country - Chicka Madden, Elder Gadigal Country

9.30am  Alasdair Foster
   The Wrong Side of the Looking Glass

10.45am  Morning Tea

11.00am  Fiona Bobongie
   Are you ready for the Black Baby Boom?

12.15pm  Dr Elizabeth Riley
   What is gender?

1.30pm  Lunch

2.15pm  Jane Caro
   What’s all the fuss about?

3.30pm  Plenary Session
   Chaired by Fran Press

4.15pm  Conference concludes

“Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.”
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
Alasdair Foster

The Wrong Side of the Looking Glass

Children are born with a strong propensity for creativity, but conventional education is specifically structured to remove it by the time they reach puberty. This shapes children to become adults in a looking glass world in which they consume other people’s ideas rather than working together to find the best outcomes for their community. As consumerism has waxed, our quality of life has waned. Since the Second World War, despite huge increases in material prosperity, childhood mental ill health has risen sharply, the gap between rich and poor escalated and our overall sense of wellbeing fallen.

Alasdair Foster believes it is important that the whole community be active participants in the ongoing creation of our shared cultures and not simply passive consumers of luxury goods and entertainment services defined by the ‘elite’. If we are not simply to live in the reflection of other people’s desires and interests, we must have agency in the present and connection to the past. If we rely on others to create our culture, we will live in an artificial, hermetic present with the promise of a future that, like the blandishments of advertising, is always some way off and never realised. The best place to break that viscous circle is in the empowerment of young people as creative citizens.

About Alasdair Foster

Alasdair Foster has 20 years’ experience heading national arts institutions and over 35 years of working in the public cultural sector. He was the founding director of Fotofeis festival, Europe’s largest photo event of the nineties (1991–1997) and director of the Australian Centre for Photography (1998–2011). He recently completed his doctoral research at Monash University, Melbourne and is an associate member of the Centre for Visual Anthropology in the Australian National University, Canberra. A Sydney-based writer and award-winning curator, he initiates intercultural art and photography projects globally.

www.culturaldevelopmentconsulting.com
Fiona Bobongie
Are you ready for the Black Baby Boom????

The audience will be motivated to hear:
Who is the Stronger Smarter Institute?

Inspired to learn:
What are the philosophies surrounding Stronger Smarter Institute?

Motivated to know:
Where does Stronger Smarter Institute work?

Challenged to identify what is coming in the next two years.
How is the Stronger Smarter Institute addressing the Black Baby Boom???

About Fiona Bobongie
Fiona is Program Coordinator at the Stronger Smarter Institute. She is a proud Darumbal and South Sea Islander woman, from the First Nations People of Tanna and Ambrym Island. Prior to joining the Stronger Smarter Institute Fiona had been with Queensland’s Department of Education since 1986 in various roles from Teacher Aide, Teacher & Acting Principal.

Over the past 5 years Fiona has worked as a Principal Project Officer – EATSIPS (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools) in the Central Queensland and North Queensland Region.

Fiona’s highlights have included presenting at QIECC State Conference, AIATSIS National Conference, National Australian Women’s Conference and spoke briefly at The World Indigenous Peoples Education Conference 2014.
Dr Elizabeth Riley

What is gender?

How is gender perceived and why does it make such a difference when a child identifies as transgender? What are the needs for a child who discloses their feelings or confusion about gender to professional carers or teachers?... and what is the reality for these children? Furthermore, what changes are required to provide a safe and comfortable environment for these children to thrive and develop healthy esteem regarding their gender expression and identity? Understanding these concepts and the way terms such as ‘gender’ and ‘transgender’ are used and how gender identity and expression are policed affords professionals working with children the gendered intelligence and language necessary to advocate for and support children with differences in gender identity and expression.

About Dr Elizabeth Riley

Dr Riley gained extensive experience working with gender diverse clients at The Gender Centre for 7 years as the centre’s first professional counsellor and has been working with transgender clients and members of the LGBTIQ community since 1997. Dr Riley has a Masters in Counselling, a Graduate Diploma in Counselling and a PhD titled ‘The needs of gender variant children and their parents’. For the last 10 years Dr Riley has also been supporting transgender children, teens and their families, providing information, resources and referrals. Dr Riley was also a founding member of the executive committee of the Australian & New Zealand Professional Association for Transgender Health (ANZPATH).
Jane Caro
What’s all the fuss about?

Having just become a grandmother, Jane will be discussing modern day parenting in all its angst and agony, taking a light-hearted but substantial look at what it means to be a parent today and how feminism, medical advances, too much information and the 24 hour news cycle have taken most of the fun out of parenting - particularly mothering. She will look at child care, baby sitting, choice of school, styles of parenting, work v life.

Her keynote promises to be forthright, amusing and subversive.

About Jane Caro
Jane Caro is an author, novelist, journalist, broadcaster, columnist, advertising writer and media and social commentator.

She has published five books and has recently published “Just a Queen” a sequel to her earlier work “Just a Girl” and “Plain Speaking Jane”

A regular on the Gruen Transfer she also appears in the media including weekly spots on Weekend Sunrise, and Sunrise. She has created, written, presented and co-produced for ABC Radio. She has also appeared on The Drum, Q&A, The Project, Daily Edition, Mornings on 9, Studio 10 and Today. She writes regular monthly columns for Mt (Management Today) Magazine, and the Sun Herald’s Sunday Life.

She is in demand as a speaker, workshop facilitator and MC.
Art Gallery of NSW

Established in 1871, the Art Gallery of NSW is proud to present fine international and Australian art in one of the most beautiful art museums in the world. They aim to be a place of experience and inspiration, through their collections, exhibitions, programs and research.

Over one million visitors a year enjoy the Gallery’s collection of Australian, Aboriginal, European, Asian and contemporary art. Located within beautiful parklands overlooking Sydney Harbour and only 15 minutes walk from the city centre.

Catering

MorSol is one of Australia’s leading restaurant and catering groups.

Proudly owned by Matt Moran and Bruce Solomon, MorSol is committed to creating unique and iconic dining experiences.

About Matt Moran:
Matt Moran is the well-known Australian chef, restaurateur and co-owner of a number of successful restaurants including ARIA Sydney and ARIA Brisbane and CHISWICK Restaurant in Sydney’s. In addition he is co-owner of the event companies ARIA Catering and ARIA Catering at Sydney Opera House and Morsol at the Art Gallery of NSW.

While Matt’s main focus remains his restaurants, his appearances on TV shows such as Chopping Block, Masterchef, Junior Masterchef and My Restaurant Rules have also helped to raise his profile. GQ Magazine awarded him Chef of the Year in November 2012.

Regardless of the outlet, Matt’s driving force remains seasonality and a passion for producing the best contemporary food possible, with a true sense of professionalism and hospitality.
Location

Where to find the Art Gallery of NSW:
On the eastern side of Sydney’s CBD, next to the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Domain, just down the road from St Mary’s Cathedral.

Getting there on foot:
About 5 minutes walk from Macquarie Street, across the Domain, or from Hyde Park.

Getting there by public transport:
Bus 441: departs from the York Street side of Queen Victoria Building and drops off near the Gallery. This bus route is still operating, despite recent changes to buses in the Sydney CBD.

Train: St James and Martin Place stations are approx. 10 minute walk.

For more information about public transport options and times, contact the Transport Infoline on 131 500 or www.131500.info

Parking:
Meter parking: on Art Gallery Road, Mrs Macquaries Road and other streets around the Gallery.

Parking stations: several near the Gallery, including the Domain Car Park which offers $6 off casual parking after the first hour Monday to Friday if your parking ticket is stamped at the Gallery’s information desk.

Accommodation:
Hotels located within walking distance of the Art Gallery include:
Ovolo Woolloomooloo (0.31km)
Travelodge Phillip Street (0.52km)
Sofitel Sydney Wentworth (0.59km)
Intercontinental Sydney (0.71km)
Sheraton on the Park (0.72km)

“This is a place like no other place on earth, a land full of wonder, mystery and danger.”
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
Domain Theatre

The Domain Theatre in the Art Gallery of New South Wales is a tiered auditorium, featuring a cinema-size screen and comfortable seating for 339 people. It has several seating spaces designed for wheelchairs and an audio-induction loop, among other features.

How to find the theatre

- Head towards the rear of the Gallery
- Take the escalators down three levels
- Turn left
- The Domain Theatre is straight ahead

Accessible directions to the theatre

- Take the lift (on your left) down two levels, to “3”
- Head through the double glass doors
- The Domain Theatre is across the foyer on your right
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Thank you for attending.