



## Media Release Thursday 27 June

### Acclaimed journalist and academic Masha Gessen leads Wheeler Centre's latest winter events

Russian-American journalist, writer and activist **Masha Gessen** will return to Melbourne for an unmissable analysis of imperialism, corruption, autocracy and the state of modern democracy presented by The Wheeler Centre this August.

The renowned reporter will be joined by ABC Global Affairs Editor **John Lyons** and host **Louisa Lim** for a discussion examining the looming threats and challenges to the current world order.

Having spent more than 20 years as a journalist and editor in Moscow, Gessen is one of the world's leading experts on authoritarianism. A staff writer for the *New Yorker* and Distinguished Professor at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, Gessen is the author of numerous bestselling books, including *Surviving Autocracy* and *The Future Is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia*.

With Gessen named on the Kremlin's wanted list last year, their writing remains as powerful as it is dangerous. And with more than half of the world's population able to vote in elections this year – including the pivotal upcoming US election – there has never been a more urgent time to confront the future of democracy.

Of Masha's appearance and The Wheeler Centre's forthcoming program, **CEO Erin Vincent** said: 'The Wheeler Centre is proud to feature such esteemed speakers to debate and interrogate these complex global issues. This special in-conversation event brings together journalists with a depth of experience and will be a chance to hear their analysis on the state of democracy, at an important time in our history.'

### Upcoming Events

Other upcoming events from The Wheeler Centre announced this week:

From 'manfluencer' culture and the rising popularity of Andrew Tate, to lists ranking teenage girls on their appearance, there's an urgent need to address the widespread sexism, misogyny and male violence in Australia's schools and wider society. In ***Boys to Men: Remodelling Masculinity***, award-winning journalist and consent educator **Jane Gilmore**, activist and co-founder of Not One More Niki, **Tarang Chawla**, and founder of The Equality Institute **Emma Fulu**, share in a hopeful and practical conversation about what can be done to create positive generational change for young men.

Traditional news media has always played an important role in framing debate about key issues of the day in Australia. But with the emergence of numerous new media avenues and more journalistic voices than ever to turn to, can audiences still trust mainstream media to provide the full picture?



**The Wheeler Centre**  
Books Writing Ideas

176 Little Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia  
+61 3 9094 7809

Expert journalists **Jan Fran, Amy McQuire** and **Tom Elliott** join host **Rachel Withers** to confront the state of today's local news landscape and ask ***Is Australian Media Broken?***

In early August, Wheeler Centre guests can be amongst the first to explore this year's Emerging Writers Festival (EWF) line-up at the official **2024 EWF Program Launch** event. Witness writers **Adalya Nash Hussein, Xiaole Zhan, Madison Griffiths, Festival Guest Curator Mackenzie Lee**, and the extended EWF Programming Team as they explore *Divinations* and speculate their own creative and literary possibilities. EWF runs 6-15 September.

Later that same month, The Wheeler Centre will present the fourth annual **Victorian Poetry Month Gala**. Host **Eleanor Jackson** will be joined by an electrifying bill of poets, including **Emilie Collyer, Jeanine Leane, Mitch McTaggart, Izzy Roberts-Orr, Thabani Tshuma, Grace Yee** and **Ouyang Yu**, who will each share work that sheds the boundaries of time in response to this year's Gala theme of *Future Epic*.

Five stellar new writers explore formative experiences and the joys and heartache of self-discovery at the latest instalment of **The Next Big Thing** at The Moat. Sharing their *Growing Pains* this August are **Alyssa Huynh, Jordan Prosser, Melanie Seward, Michelle See-Tho** and **Elena Hogan**.

*Masha Gessen's visit to Australia is made possible by the support of Bill Manos and the Manos Foundation. Masha Gessen is presented in Melbourne by The Wheeler Centre and in Sydney by Festival of Dangerous Ideas.*

– ENDS –

#### **Media contact**

Alice Lewinsky  
alice@commonstate.co  
0403 837 351

#### **Media centre**

Images available [here](#)

The full list of events and dates are listed below. For more information, please visit [wheelercentre.com/events](http://wheelercentre.com/events)

#### ***Boys to Men: Remodelling Masculinity***

Jane Gilmore, Tarang Chawla and Emma Fulu  
6.30pm, Thursday 25 July  
The Wheeler Centre

#### ***Is Australian Media Broken?***

Tom Elliott, Jan Fran, Amy McQuire and Rachel Withers  
6.30pm, Wednesday 31 July  
The Wheeler Centre

**wheelercentre.com**

Trading as Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas  
ABN 97 134 682 189



Melbourne  
City of  
Literature





**The Wheeler Centre**  
Books Writing Ideas

176 Little Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia  
+61 3 9094 7809

***Emerging Writers' Festival Program Launch: Divinations***

Adalya Nash Hussein, Xiaole Zhan, Madison Griffiths, Mackenzie Lee, Ruby-Rose Pivet-Marsh, Jess Zaroni, Kanika Chopra

6.30pm, Thursday 1 August

The Wheeler Centre

***Victorian Poetry Month Gala 2024: Future Epic***

Eleanor Jackson, Emilie Collyer, Jeanine Leane, Mitch McTaggart, Izzy Roberts-Orr, Thabani Tshuma, Grace Yee, Ouyang Yu

6.30pm, Wednesday 15 August

The Wheeler Centre

***Next Big Thing August: Growing Pains***

Alyssa Huynh, Jordan Prosser, Melanie Saward, Michelle See-Tho, Elena Hogan

6.30pm, Monday 19 August

The Moat

***The Future of Democracy with Masha Gessen and John Lyons***

Masha Gessen, John Lyons, Louisa Lim

7.00pm, Wednesday 21 August

The Edge, Federation Square

*The Wheeler Centre is Melbourne's home for smart, passionate and entertaining public talks, and exists to support writers, readers and thinkers. Through live and digital conversations, debates, readings, performances and discussions, it deepens public engagement with the most pressing topics of the day. It is dedicated to creative collaboration, community engagement, diversity, and innovation.*

**wheelercentre.com**

Trading as Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas  
ABN 97 134 682 189



Melbourne  
City of  
Literature

