

KIDS GO WILD

KIDS' DAY AT THE BYRON BAY WRITERS FESTIVAL

Saturday 28 July sees one of the beautiful marquees at the Byron Bay Writers Festival turn into the Kids Marquee and the line up this year features writers visiting the Festival for the very first time.

Leading the charge for children six years and older is picture book perennial Bruce Whatley. Bruce's inspiration for his beloved picture books springs from his family, and some of his most begged, borrowed and bought are *The Ugliest Dog in the World*, *Looking for Crabs*, *Detective Donut* and *the Wild Goose Chase* and *Little White Dogs Can't Jump*. For adult fans, Bruce is also presenting a dynamic and stress free workshop, suitable for novice artists and story tellers, showing how simple images can speak volumes of narrative.

Picture books are the specialty of local artist and writer Kim Michelle Toft, whose gorgeous illustrations reflect her passion for beautiful underwater creatures and awaken the same spellbound rapture from her readers. Children fall in love with her vibrant colours and Kim is widely sought after as an inspirational presenter. Simple stories, appealing creatures and an uncanny ability to connect with her audience, mean that Kim's Festival appearances are memorable and her debut at the Festival much anticipated.

Also discovered in the Northern Rivers region is international mega star of children's literature, Martin Chatterton. Mad, marvellous and monstrously funny, Martin has been living quietly until Festival organisers begged him to join their line-up for Kids. When a new Martin Chatterton book is released in the UK, kids go wild. Following Martin is Miles Merrill, and if you've never seen Miles, watch out! The Chicago-born poet brings kids alive with his combination of hip-hop, theatre and music. Miles tours schools, libraries and Festivals internationally and will be followed by a brand new ingredient in the Kids Marquee: Meet Byron Kids. Mandy Nolan has picked a mob of her fledgling writers to present cutting edge humour, kid style. Be there but be warned: sides may split.

Older kids will be inspired by the beautiful fifteen year old author, Alexandra Adornetto. Eloquent, intelligent and imaginative, Alexandra's first book for teen readers has just been released and hers is a name to remember. And, drum roll, closing the day is Debra Oswald, whose play *Dags* has been seen by thousands of school kids nationally and abroad. Debra has written for the Aussie Bite series, for television drama, for theatre, for primary and secondary students and now launches her teen reader novel, *Getting Air*. Debra is funny, warm and totally terrific.

Kids Day Passes now on sale at Jetset Byron Bay 6685 6262 or www.byronbaywritersfestival.com