

SILKEN SEDUCTION AT THE BYRON BAY WRITERS FESTIVAL

Laksmi Pamuntjak and Ketut Yuliarsa will provide an Indonesian flavour to the Byron Bay Writers Festival 2007. They will be joined by other significant Asian voices in Yong Shu Hoong of Singapore and Hong Kong's Nury Vittachi. Ubud Writers and Readers Festival Director Janet de Neefe will once more grace the marquees, as will Singapore television's Deepika Shetty.

Obviously the signature event for the Indonesian guests will be Sunday's Allspice Indonesian lunch at Byron's Offshore Bistro +Bar. Guests will be treated to authentic Balinese food and seductive music and readings from Laksmi and Ketut and will listen entranced as Janet and Nury discuss life and food in Bali.

Said Festival Director Jeni Caffin "While it is important to shine the spotlight on the writers from across the seas, what seems even more crucial is to bring these writers centre stage with our own writers, so audience are exposed to a genuinely cross cultural experience. Saturday evening's poetry event is a key example, where Ketut, Laksmi and Shu Hoong will speak their poetry in an arena with Cate Kennedy, Rhyll McMaster and Miles Merrill. " Laksmi and Shu Hoong have been selected for a Festival session Chaired by Radio National's Lyn Gallacher, entitled Rhythm rules: contemporary poets rap about language. A rich tapestry of styles and approaches will be woven when Chicago Rap poet Miles Merrill and Sydney's John Bennett join the mix.

Of great interest will be the Conversation hosted by Janet de Neefe in which Ketut Yuliarsa and Yong Shu Hoong travel Over the hills and far away, exploring the freedoms and limitations of writing in English. Further combination of local and distant voices will be heard in Home and away: what succeeds in a global market, where Deepika Shetty investigates how one tackles the problems of embracing readers and cultures far removed from one's own, what works, what doesn't and how this impacts on the writer. Sharing their experiences will be Australian crime writer maestro Garry Disher, creator of the Feng Shui Detective, Nury Vittachi and sumptuous poet and short story writer Laksmi Pamuntjak. All of these writers are in constant demand on the international Festival circuit and are spirited and generous participants.

This is but a taste of the warmth and flavour with which the visiting writers will grace the Festival, and mention must be made of the Friday launch of David Miller's *Step Into Ubd*. Janet de Neefe will send the book on its journey, with Festival blessings. The Australia Indonesia Arts Alliance will draw its raffle prizes at the launch and the Byron Bay Writers Festival has donated two tickets to the extraordinary music event, TaikOz, which will bring Bangalow alive on the evening of Saturday 28 July. The Festival for thinkers provides much food for thought, and you are guaranteed to find something to satisfy every appetite.

All tickets to the Festival are now on sale at Jetset Byron Bay on 02 6685 6262 and www.byronbaywritersfestival.com