

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Writing Place

*Country Arts SA, Carclew and Australian Theatre for Young People (ATYP) are coming together for the first time to connect young writers based in regional areas with three of Australia's leading playwrights*

Twenty emerging writers and performance makers aged 18-26 will be selected from all over Australia to participate in a week-long intensive program to develop their craft in Whyalla this September. Mentored by playwrights Caleb Lewis, Finegan Kruckemeyer and Mary Anne Butler, each participant will write a monologue for teenage performers. Ten of the scripts created during Writing Place will be selected for publication in a hardcopy collection for young people, secondary drama teachers and youth arts facilitators.

This is the first time South Australia will play host to the established residency program. Writing Place is inspired by and will run concurrently with Australian Theatre for Young People's (ATYP) hugely successful "National Studio" that has run annually in New South Wales since 2008, developing high quality scripts from and for young Australians.

*"Writing Place has been established in response to consultation with teachers and young people from regional SA who expressed concern over the lack of scripts that reflect the lives and experiences of regional young people,"* said Alysha Herrmann, Creative Producer Regional Youth at Country Arts SA and Carclew, who is coordinating the residency.

*"The little new amount of work that does exist for teenagers in Australia tends to be focussed on metropolitan and east coast experiences. There is a desire for performance work that reflects the landscape, attitudes and experiences of regional Australia."*

Writing Place has been created to unearth and nurture the next generation of regional voices by building the skills of emerging writers and creating scripts dedicated to young performers. During the residency, participating writers will start building networks and be mentored by award-winning writers through attending master classes, small group tutorials and one-on-one sessions in a formative creative experience. Writers and mentors will be immersed in the remote and spectacular Eyre Peninsula region for the week with opportunities to connect to and better understand this distinct and important region as part of the residency.

The collection of scripts generated during the week will reflect the specific landscapes, experiences, relationships and attitudes of young people from regional Australia. These scripts will be available to be accessed and produced by schools and youth theatres around the country for years to come.

*"National Studio was the first time I ever had dedicated time and space to properly workshop an idea through more than one draft to a finished piece, which gave me so much confidence. I could work through this process again and again. I met other artists and felt like I was taken seriously as a young playwright with something to say."* Said Lauren Sherrit, a former participant of the National Studio in New South Wales.

*"Before I went on the retreat, I had no confidence in myself as a writer or storyteller, and I didn't know any other young playwrights my age, leaving me pretty isolated. When I went to National Studio in 2015 I met a fantastic group of people who helped me find my voice as a writer and solidify my goals for my writing career,"* said Gemma Neall, a former participant of the National Studio in New South Wales.

**Writing Place** takes place 3-11 September, 2019 in Whyalla, South Australia. Applications are now open and close on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2019. Applicants are invited to submit a sample of their work and undertake a simple creative writing task. Visit [Carclew](http://Carclew.com.au), [Country Arts SA](http://CountryArtsSA.com.au) or [ATYP](http://ATYP.com.au) websites for further information and application details.

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