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## **Poetry in the Park**

The outstanding work and achievements of Western Australia's poets will be celebrated with the launch of Poetry Park from 5.30pm on Thursday, 15 May at Neil McDougall Park in Como.

The first phase of the Poetry Park project involves the installation of panels displaying the work of twelve of WA's most highly acclaimed poets, as well as a 'Poets Walk of Honour' featuring plaques bearing the names of poetry winners of the WA Premier's Book Award.

Poets represented on the panels are John Kinsella, Philip Salom, Fay Zwicky, Andrew Lansdown, Tracy Ryan, Rod Moran, Dennis Haskell, Andrew Taylor, Alec Choate, Miriam Lo, Barbara Temperton and Roland Leach.

This unique project has been conceived and coordinated by one of the State's most prolific writers, Ken Spillman.

"WA's poets are among the best working in the English language," said Spillman.

"The poets featured have won scores of literary awards both in Australia and abroad, yet they receive little public recognition.

"My goal was to celebrate their achievements and introduce new readers to their work."

The Poetry Park project has sparked international interest and the opening event will also see the launch of a collection of Australian and Singaporean poems entitled *Over There: Poems from Singapore & Australia*, edited by John Kinsella in association with acclaimed Singaporean poet Alvin Pang.

The launch is being held in association with the Singapore Arts Council and the Poetry Park project has been funded by the City with the assistance of a Lotterywest grant, and has the support of the State Library of Western Australia, WritingWA and the South Perth Historical Society.

Mayor James Best said the project was an innovative one and the first of its kind in Australia.

"This initiative will enhance the existing character of Neil McDougall Park, providing a quiet and contemplative setting in which the work of Western Australia's poets is prominent," he said.

"We anticipate that it will provide future educational opportunities for schools and the wider community, and envisage cultural events such as writing festivals and book launches being included in the community calendar within this historic setting."

Professor Edwin Thumboo, a recipient of Singapore's highest honour, the Meritorious Service Medal, as Distinguished Poet and Literary Scholar, Professor Kirpal Singh and the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Lee Suan Hiang of Singapore's Arts Council, have indicated they will attend the launch.

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*A* South Perth  
*D*reaming

By Rod Moran

Along the foreshore's catherine-wheel rim  
the low-rise city cascaded to Mends Street,  
blue flukes of starlight stippling Miller's Pond.  
The Manning dairy was a clutter of byres,  
perched by a harbour of the suburb's past,  
where the pig-tailed ghost of a Chinese gardener,  
the silt of the Yangtze staining his veins,  
tilled the rich serries of marl and loam,  
a fire-fly moon white as frangipani.  
Heron scrailed by the shimmering river,  
their flight like calligraphy on the air.  
The Old Mill ticked over time in memory,  
and sailed the wind on its wooden kites.  
Mysteries of fish flapped on Coode Street jetty,  
yellow-fin, bream, cobbler black as night,  
parrot fish with flanks spangled in neon.  
My grandfather wheezed from World War I  
as he cast with artistry into the breeze,  
shards of moonlight jagged by a sandbank,  
the Kings Park cairn like an apparition  
poised in an ether on the river's glaze.

Extract from *A South Perth Dreaming*

Rod Moran (b. 1952) spent most of his early life in WA and graduated from the University of Melbourne. His work first achieved publication in the *Bulletin* when he was 18, and his selected poems, *The Paradoxes of Water*, won a WA Premier's Book Award in 2005.



*One of the poetry panels that will be displayed in McDougall Park*

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