

## January-February highlights

ABR's annual double issue is packed with summer-reading features. To complement our Books of the Year feature (December issue), Australia's top arts critics nominate 2023's outstanding productions. Kevin Foster doesn't pull his punches on David McBride's whistleblower memoir, Emma Dortins reviews Kate Fullagar's innovative biography of Bennelong and Arthur Phillip, and Frank Bongiorno considers Raimond Gaita's tangle with life's big questions. Gordon Pentland takes on Theresa May and Stuart Kells eyes Qantas. Ebony Nilsson unearths ASIO files to reveal ordinary lives and Peter Edwards considers political interference in official military histories. We review new fiction from Lucy Treloar, Max Easton, and Sigrid Nunez. As always, the summer issue features the five poems shortlisted in this year's Peter Porter Poetry Prize.



Clockwise from top left: David McBride (Penguin Random House/*Urban Dystopian*), Ebony Nilsson, Warwick Fyfe as Wotan in *Die Walküre* (Melbourne Opera/Robin Halls), and Kate Fullagar (Simon & Schuster)

**Peter Porter Poetry Prize 2024 Shortlist** Ahead of the announcement of a winner in late January, we publish five outstanding shortlisted poems by Judith Nangala Crispin (NSW), Natalie Damjanovich-Napoleon (WA), Dan Hogan (NSW), Meredi Ortega (Scotland/UK), and Dženana Vucic (Germany).

**Arts Highlights 2023** Nineteen of Australia's top arts critics nominate their favourite exhibitions, concerts, and productions of 2023, as ABR looks ahead to another year of extensive arts coverage.

**Kevin Foster reviews David McBride's *been-there-done-that* memoir** In an explosive review of a memoir by David McBride, the whistleblower behind *The Afghan Files*, Kevin Foster warns: 'Sometimes, for the faithful, it doesn't do to look too closely into the life of your chosen idol.'

**Emma Dortins on Bennelong and Arthur Phillip** Reviewing Kate Fullagar's innovative 'backwards biography', Bennelong & Phillip, historian Emma Dortins argues that the Eora man and first governor become something more than emblems in Fullagar's skilful hands.

**Ebony Nilsson on the 'ordinary' lives revealed in ASIO files** In a superbly written commentary, historian and ABR Laureate Fellow Ebony Nilsson shows that the hidden lives of mid-twentieth-century migrants can be glimpsed through the records of Australia's chief citizen-surveillance organisation.

### Interview requests and further information

For interview requests, please contact ABR.

(03) 9699 8822 | [editor@australianbookreview.com.au](mailto:editor@australianbookreview.com.au)