



EMERGING WRITERS' FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES JESS ZANONI AS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Monday 20 January 2025: The Emerging Writers' Festival (EWF) is excited to announce the appointment of Jess Zanoni as its new Artistic Director & co-CEO.

This appointment marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for EWF - one of Australia's most respected and impactful literary festival institutions - with Zanoni bringing her distinctive and passionate blend of literary, artistic and musical expertise to the role.

A multifaceted creative force in Melbourne's arts scene, Zanoni steps into the position after most recently serving as EWF's multiskilled Program Coordinator, where she has already demonstrated her commitment and prowess in nurturing emerging literary talent.

One of the Emerging Writers' Festival's strongest strategic initiatives is creating meaningful pathways not only for emerging writers and artists, but also for administrators and future leaders. The appointment of Jess Zanoni as the next Artistic Director of the much-loved festival demonstrates this wholeheartedly.

'The Emerging Writers' Festival remains an unparalleled medium for Australian writers in their personal, professional and creative journeys. Now more than ever, EWF is instrumental as a space for meaningful connection, as well as artistic exploration and growth. I am honoured to take on this role,' says Zanoni. 'As someone who has been both an audience member and artist at EWF, I understand both the challenges and opportunities facing emerging writers. I am excited to build

on EWF's legacy of innovative programming, and in supporting many writers with their first foray into the literary landscape.'

Zanoni brings a unique perspective to the Artistic Director & co-CEO role, combining her experience as a published writer whose work has appeared in prestigious publications including *The Age*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, and *The Victorian Writer*, an arts and literature programmer, and as a musician.

Here is more about Zanoni:

Jess Zanoni is a writer, producer and musician. She has worked, edited and written for various arts, music and literary publications and organisations for the past decade. Jess has led an array of community-centred projects and events, including live music and writing series 'Heavy Sleeves'. In 2022 she hosted literary pop up show 'Spring Passage' on 3RRR, where she is still a casual radio presenter. Jess was EWF's Program Coordinator from 2023-2024, where she created and produced the in-conversation podcast 'Crossings'. She is the singer and bassist of alt-pop band Arbes, who released their debut record 'Counterways' in November 2024. Her debut solo record is forthcoming in 2025, under her alias Za Noon.

"It is my sincere pleasure to appoint Jess Zanoni as the next Artistic Director of the Emerging Writers' Festival. I have witnessed Jess' creative and professional growth and dedication over several years now, and believe she is deserving of this exciting opportunity to lead the organisation, in collaboration with Executive Director and co-CEO Jes Layton, through its next chapter. Jess Z and Jes L will be a dynamic duo that will continue to represent the festival and our dear community with passion and pride" says Latoyah Forsyth, Chair of the Emerging Writers' Festival Board.

Under Zanoni's artistic leadership, EWF will continue its mission to develop, nurture, and promote Australia's new writing talent, while exploring fresh approaches to connecting writing communities with audiences across the country. Her appointment promises to strengthen EWF's position as a crucial platform for emerging voices in Australian literature.

Monday, 20 January 2025 marks the beginning of Zanoni's tenure as Artistic Director & co-CEO, alongside Executive Director & co-CEO Jes Layton.

Jess Zanoni's appointment comes at a time when supporting and amplifying new literary voices is more vital than ever to Australia's cultural landscape.

The Emerging Writers' Festival will take place 11-18 September 2025.

For more information, including interview requests, please email henry@emergingwritersfestival.org.au