

## ZineWest '11

a zine and competition for western sydney writers

NEW Writers' Group inc developed the ZineWest project to celebrate and reflect the passion and diversity of today's writing in local communities. ZineWest editors undertake to select impartially from a range of genre regardless of their personal writing style or reading preferences. We send our publication list to the Judge who determines the prizes in the same spirit. What counts in ZineWest is how well you work with your genre of choice. We rank on three basic criteria: technique, originality and appeal.

This year the editors who select your entries for publication in ZW11 will be the same as last year. The judge is the same person also. Reading a copy of ZW10 might therefore give you some clues; however selection involves making comparisons and each year's unique collection of entries sets the pace.

*Here are some basic rules and comments that will help your piece shine in any pile!*

- **Send us your best work.**
- **Aim to communicate** in a clear voice that has the adult contemporary reader in mind. Whether your setting is a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Venice or a futuristic Campbelltown, your readers live in 2011.
- **Old Work** - If you wrote your entry a fair while ago, *revise, re-imagine, rewrite*.
- **Memoir** – Think about dramatising a key sequence using the techniques of narrative. You have 800 words max, so cut anything that merely recounts facts. A 'true' story can be told like fiction.
- **If English is your second language** you might make errors that obscure your meaning. Seek free feedback from a friend with **excellent** English. This is particularly important with poetry; we're reluctant to edit and possibly spoil your phrasing. With the right help, you are your best editor.
- **Technical prowess:** Some pieces selected will be less mature technically than others. They will increase their ranking by possessing other qualities: an appealing ambience, a convincing commitment. However commonsense will tell you what happens when a piece is technically sound and has other strengths as well – it will have more chance to be published and win a prize.
- **Regular rhyme/metre:** Many entrants send rhyming poems so we're keen to include them but with a few stand-out exceptions, they are technically uneven and hard to edit. A 'fix' may mean the next line has to change, maybe the whole stanza. As editor for a writers' group I believe if you can write one good stanza you have the skills to write ten. Revise, re-write if necessary and avoid:
  1. lines that say nothing much, they just fill up a space to complete a stanza
  2. lines twisted to achieve a rhyme; **stop doing this folks!!**
  3. rhythms that drop heavily at the end of every line; clunk, clunk
  4. clichés and superlatives - try for clarity, freshness, relevance – in *your* words
- **Contemporary Poetry/Prose:** Editors will read several times to get close to innovative, complex or subtle work, but if they're battling to appreciate/evaluate, your technical score will diminish.
- **Don't rant:** Keep it for your diary or the soap box. (When we're passionate we don't always realise we're SHOUTING.) Avoid moralising, avoid repetition. Draw your reader in. Maybe tell us a story...
- **Revise:** All genres require your close attention, deep thought and willingness to re-write!
- **We love to read your work, so we hope you enjoy ZineWest!**