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### **Introduction: *Creative Writing as Research IV***

This special issue of *TEXT* responds to the current challenge faced by writers in the academy to identify with greater precision what it is about their work which is genuinely an original contribution to knowledge across the field of creative writing (or, more rarely, in another field). It follows from the acclaim with which the first three *Creative Writing as Research* special issues, published in *TEXT* in 2010, 2012 and 2014, have been met. In those landmark collections, creative writing pieces from writers based in universities around Australia and New Zealand were published under refereed circumstances with statements regarding their status as research attached. Not only – as reader feedback told us – did *TEXT*'s readership enjoy consuming a range of creative work from creative writing academic researchers, they also found the research statements useful as models for their own practice and others in their universities.

Contributors to this Special issue of *TEXT* were invited to work collaboratively with the editors on what is now the fourth iteration in the series of *Creative Writing as Research* issues, each work comprising a piece of creative writing together with a statement of research background, contribution and significance, following the latest requirements of the Australian Research Council's Excellence for Research in Australia process. As a result, the issue brings together diverse examples that give an overview of contemporary best practice in creative work as research, including a set of exemplary research statements, work towards which may assist others in the coming ERA collection rounds, and also prompt further investigation and scholarship in this area.

The included creative works are from many forms and genres including poetry, short stories, prose excerpted from longer works, creative non-fiction including the personal essay, life writing, ficto-critical work, graphic and other image-based production. The exegetical research statements have attempted to describe how the creative work is a distinctive contribution to knowledge that extends the current scholarly and creative literature in the field. The research statements indicate the research significance and contribution of the creative piece by drawing on scholarship relevant to the work's topic, and strictly follow the ERA Submission Guidelines which were the latest available when we made this call for papers (ARC 2012).

We also asked for the final revised works (including research statements and any endnotes) to be relatively short – a maximum of 3,250 words (the creative works a maximum 3,000 words; the research statements a maximum 250 words or, as our patient authors and eagle eyed reviewers will acknowledge, strictly 2,000 characters including spaces and any references cited). This brevity allowed us to include a large number of works – twenty-seven in this issue – and therefore display a wide range of research statements alongside the wonderful range of creative works.

Another, now traditional, component of this most un-traditional of endeavours is that the issue is produced, as the first sentence in this introduction mentions, in a collaborative manner. Each contributor was asked to also commit to contributing to the blind referee reviewer teams for the issue. Each contributor was expected to review and referee for publication at least two submissions, offering commentary on the quality of the creative work, any improvements needed, the clarity and value of the research statement and whether the piece, with its joint parts, was ultimately successful and persuasive in its research claims in the field. Finally, referees were asked to recommend acceptance for publication or not based on this assessment. With six editors and almost thirty successful contributors, this made for a very lively, productive and always collegial process. The results, we are proud to say, are published in this issue.

As a result of the uniqueness of these collections and the way colleagues attest to the pleasure and use to which they have put their contents, the series editors of this series, Nigel Krauth and Donna Lee Brien, have decided to make this an annual collection from this issue in 2015. Each issue, published with the October issue of *TEXT*, will also maintain a small core of editors from the previous issue, but include new editors for an issue or two, to include new voices, skills and ingenuity in the creative research space.

We finish with a sincere and warm thank you to our co-editors, contributors and the additional referees who generously contributed their knowledge and work to making this issue a success.

## Works cited

- Australian Research Council (ARC) 2012 *ERA submission guidelines*, at [http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/era12/ERA2012\\_SubmissionGuidelines.pdf](http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/era12/ERA2012_SubmissionGuidelines.pdf) (accessed 4 September 2015)
- Brien, Donna Lee, Nigel Krauth and Jen Webb 2010 *Creative Writing as Research*, *TEXT Special issue 7*, at <http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue7/content.htm> (accessed 4 September 2015)
- Krauth, Nigel and Donna Lee Brien 2012 *Creative Writing as Research II*, *TEXT Special issue 15*, at <http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue15/content.htm> (accessed 4 September 2015)
- Krauth, Nigel, Donna Lee Brien, Ross Watkins and Anthony Lawrence 2014 *Creative Writing as Research III*, *TEXT Special issue 27*, at <http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue27/content.htm> (accessed 4 September 2015)