

POETRY IN FIRST LANGUAGES GUNDUNGURRA

with Kirli Saunders

Red Room Poetry

Red Room Poetry inspires students and teachers to create, perform and publish poetry. We enliven experiences with poetry by bringing contemporary poets into classrooms across Australia to run dynamic writing workshops that awaken imaginations and support creative opportunities.

Poetry in First Languages - Gundungurra

In partnership with Wingecarribee Shire Council and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, this year Poetry in First Languages Gundungurra focused on connecting to Country through a conservation project *Glossies in the Mist*.

Following the cultural experience Gunai poet Kirli Saunders guided students from Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School, St Pauls Primary School, Moss Vale High School, Bowral High School, Bowral Public School and Berrima Public School through the new resource, specific to Gundungurra Country, with Aunty Trish Levett.

Kirli Saunders

Kirli Saunders is a proud Gunai woman with ties to the Yuin, Gundungurra, Gadigal and Biripi people. Kirli is the Manager of Poetic Learning and Aboriginal Cultural Liaison at Red Room Poetry. Kirli founded the Poetry in First Languages project.

Her first children's picture book *The Incredible Freedom Machines*, illustrated by Matt Ottley was selected for Bologna Book Fair and is published internationally. Her second picture book *Our Dreaming* will be released by Scholastic in July 2019, *Happy Ever After* will follow in February 2020. Kirli's First Poetry Collection, *Kindred* has just been released by Magabala, it was Highly Commended in the 2018 Black&Write! prize.

Kirli's poetry has been published by Cordite and Overland and has embedded in infrastructure at Darling Harbour and the Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne.

Garrall Duwi

*By Ben, Year 3
Bowral Public School*

Black, red tailed and incredible
A garrall in a daurdan, eating and dropping duwi nuts
The garrall tells me there is canbe down the bottom of
the marragon and to fly away from the canbe
I feel cool, calm and collected

-

Black, red tailed and incredible
A black cockatoo in a tree, eating and dropping dreaming nuts
The cockatoo tells me that there is fire down the bottom of
the little mountain and to fly away from the fire
I feel cool, calm and collected

Garrall

*By Cooper, Year 4
Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School*

darrambyang, garrall, red-tail
peaceful, nice, calm
I see darrambyang and garrall
The budan tells me to respect the land.
I feel calm.

-

Gum leaves, black cockatoo, red-tail
peaceful, nice, calm
I see gum leaves and black cockatoos
The bird tells me to respect the land.
I feel calm.

Garrall

*By Isabella, Year 6
Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School*

Black, cheeky, mysterious
There is a garrall sitting in a darudan eating peacefully
The bird tells me not to be cheeky
I feel trusted and more calm

-

Black, cheeky, mysterious
There is a black cockatoo sitting in a tree eating peacefully
The bird tells me not to be cheeky
I feel trusted and more calm

trees / darudan

*By Teneaka, Year 6
Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School*

wavy wet muggy
I see the beautiful grass green darudan with the garrall
nibbling the nuts dropping the shells.
The tree says I am beautiful and I am my own spirit animal
I feel free, calm, connected, I can do my own thing, responsible.

-

wavy wet muggy
I see the beautiful grass green tree with the black cockatoo
nibbling the nuts dropping the shells.
The tree says I am beautiful and I am my own spirit animal
I feel free, calm, connected, I can do my own thing, responsible.

Untitled

*By Jarrah, Year 5
Berrima Public School*

quiet, picky, black
I see a garrall chewing on duwi nuts.
The budan tells me to fly high because there is no limit to what can be achieved.
I feel a sense of trust.

-

quiet, picky, black
I see a black cockatoo chewing on Dreaming nuts.
The bird tells me to fly high because there is no limit to what can be achieved.
I feel a sense of trust.

Black Cockatoo

*By Sam, Year 1
Bowral Public School*

Black, incredible, helpful
When I stand under the darudan I see garrall
The garrall tells me to look after the darudan
So they can live
I feel wonderful

-

Black, incredible, helpful
When I stand under the tree I see black cockatoos
The black cockatoo tells me to look after the trees
So they can live
I feel wonderful

Black Cockatoo

*By Jake, Year 5
Bowral Public School*

picky, resourceful, quiet
I see garral eating duwi nuts
as it slowly goes
into its home
the budan tells me it needs help to live
we must plant she-oak
I felt like I was helping the garrall

-

picky, resourceful, quiet
I see black cockatoo eating Dreaming nuts
as it slowly goes
into its home
the bird tells me it needs help to live
we must plant she-oak
I felt like I was helping the black cockatoo

Untitled

*By Tyra, Year 4
Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School*

Garrall tells me it loves me when I take care and love. Garrall tells me if there are canbe and if it's karrat.

-

Black cockatoo tells me it loves me when I take care and love. Black cockatoo tells me if there are fire and if it's raining.

gah-rrr-rahl

*By Aubrey, Year 4
Berrima Public School*

black, red, yellow
I stand under the darudan
I see a black and red garrall
eating duwi nuts
the cockatoo tells me that they need help
I know I need to help and plant darudan

black, red, yellow
I stand under the tree
I see a black and red cockatoo
eating Dreaming nuts
the cockatoo tells me that they need help
I know I need to help and plant trees

gum tree

*By Mikayla, Year 3
Berrima Public School*

Strong, green, tall
I stand under the darudan
and see a black budan
slightly through the leaves
the garrall tells me
if you fall you get back up
and try again
I feel happy and strong

Strong, green, tall
I stand under the tree
and see a black bird
slightly through the leaves
the cockatoo tells me
if you fall you get back up
and try again
I feel happy and strong

Strong, tall, wise.

*By Evie, Year 3
Bowral Public School*

I stand under the darudan and I see
beautiful green leaves with brown nuts and
I know that I am free
The garrall tells me to look after the
wildlife.
I feel very responsible when she
tells me to look after the wildlife.

I stand under the tree and I see
beautiful green leaves with brown nuts and
I know that I am free
The cockatoo tells me to look after the
wildlife.
I feel very responsible when she
tells me to look after the wildlife.

Listening

By Trai, Year 3

Aurora Southern Highlands Steiner School

I stand under the darudan and I see
leaves, duwi nuts, budan, bark, branches, garrall, red, green
brown, yellow, orange, white, blue, purple, black
The darudan tells me to look after her
The garrall tells me to look after him
I feel responsible.

-

I stand under the tree and I see
leaves, Dreaming nuts, birds, bark, branches, cockatoos, red, green
brown, yellow, orange, white, blue, purple, black
The tree tells me to look after her
The cockatoo tells me to look after him
I feel responsible.

Garralls

By Isabella, Year 3

Berrima Public School

I stand under the darudan
I see green leaves
The garrall tells me
You need to help the darudan
I feel like I can make a difference

-

I stand under the tree
I see green leaves
The black cockatoo tells me
You need to help the trees
I feel like I can make a difference

Budan

*By Bailey, Year 10
Moss Vale High School*

Daoure beneath my toes
ganbi amongst my nose
the dulang rushes fast
just as the budan flies past
I hear the canbe crackle loud
as a budan lands on the only tree
that's only been burned a bit that I can see
she tongay and tongay about daoure
and all that's left is char and sand
loud cries the lost garrall
for it seems it's her time too

~

Earth beneath my toes
smoke amongst my nose
the river rushes fast
just as the bird flies past
I hear the fire crackle loud
as a bird lands on the only tree
that's only been burned a bit that I can see
she cries and cries about earth
loud cries the lost cockatoo
for it seems it's her time too

stolen change

*By Billy, Year 11
Moss Vale High School*

We are yurwang, we will fight
Mil drown like a tooluan
I will change this daoure for what is right
We as one nation, as the Australian people today
We fight together, we fight as one
We are united in journey, we are all just one

~

We are strong, we will fight
Eyes drown like a river
I will change this land for what is right
We as one nation, as the Australian people today
We fight together, we fight as one
We are united in journey, we are all just one

A Land of Love and Flame

*By Kristal, Year 12
Moss Vale High School*

The sky is aching again
it forgot the scent of karrat
the air is sifting flour again
gumtrees releasing leaves again
the ants have all dug deep again
waiting for the flames
the daoure was wrought in canbe
the burning back stands still now
the red night ridges flicker now
bawa canbe has come again
in bushfire we unite again
the land of love and flames

~

The sky is aching again
it forgot the scent of rain
the air is sifting flour again
gumtrees releasing leaves again
the ants have all dug deep again
waiting for the flames
the earth was wrought in fire
the burning back stands still now
the red night ridges flicker now
fire bush has come again
in bushfire we unite again
the land of love and flames

Yoongaba garrall budan (to sing black cockatoo bird)

By Grace, Year 12

Moss Vale High School

Mother Daoure glide with your Duwi across the gurad
Yana with me through the Darrambyang's past the colo's
and Budans
Talk with me about the bawa, karrat and canbe.
Speak with me about the Garrall budan that brings duwi of the
Karrat and canbe.
"We must protect them", says Mother Daoure
pialla nungungnungula good ja gan yoongaba of mirren

~

Mother Earth glide with your dreaming across the ground
Walk with me through the white gum trees, past the koalas and birds.
Talk with me about the bush, rain and fire.
Speak with me about the black cockatoo bird that brings Dreaming of the rain and fire.
"We must protect them" says Mother Earth
Talk to the people, small child to sing of belonging.

Burrungilling (Ancestors)

By Corby-Lee, Year 8

Moss Vale High School

The Darudan are our ancestors
they remind us that we are not alone
In their company nga feel safe and confident
as nga follow the Darudan
Nga learn that nga have to protect our gurad Gummuang Daoure

~

The trees are our ancestors
they remind us that we are not alone
in their company I feel safe and confident
as I follow the trees
I learn that I have to protect our land Mother Earth

The Earth and Sea

By Natarsha, Year 9

Moss Vale High School

Goolanga, gulangga, nga, can see the Gudang and the winyoo
Go on good ja gan you are allowed yarra
The bunyal is blazing hot, but the sand is nice and cool
This is our country every burall, and every burriooloo

~

I can see the sea and sunset
Go on small child you are allowed to swim
The sun is blazing hot, but the sand is nice and cool
This is our country, every day and every night

Loved

*By Joshe, Year 7
Moss Vale High School*

When we first stepped on Gundungurra gurad
We thought we were free
HELP!
Cried the good ja gah
We ran out, people standing in front of us
They looked at us like we were aliens
Holding the boy hostage they called all the others over
They split us up
Cut into four groups
Murrin
Bullan
Boys
Girls
We didn't understand
We have been taken from our nabu
Our daoure
The days we loved would never be the days we have again

~

Our Lord

*By Ariann, Year 9
Moss Vale High School*

The kedumba flows through the Marragon, moistening the murool
underneath the talara warrin burrie

~

The water flows through the little mountain, moistening the dry earth
underneath the frost winter night

When we first stepped on Gundungurra land
We thought we were free
HELP!
Cried the good child
We ran out, people standing in front of us
They looked at us like we were aliens
Holding the boy hostage they called all the others over
They split us up
Cut into four groups
Men
Women
Boys
Girls
We didn't understand
We have been taken from our family
Our land
The days we loved would never be the days we have again

Untitled

*By Anon
Moss Vale High School*

Mirren nungungula is the bawa, dulnag, and the daoure
From the gwibul to the guru, from gonya to winyooa
And burru and colo, we have a role to play
Goolanlee have a role to play

~

Belonging to the people is the bush, river and the land
From the dead trees, to the deep water
from sunset, to sunrise, and Kangaroo and Koala
we have a role to play, you have a role to play

Winter Waterfall

By Skye, Year 10

Moss Vale High School

Talara in the yarang crosses the hills above warrin kedumba
Berrima fly above the gunar in the calm karrat below
the gentle dwiuga

~

Frost in the valley crosses the hills
above the winter waterfall
Black Swans fly above the mountain tops
in the calm rain below the gentle falling stars

Night Fire

By Nate, Year 7

Moss Vale High School

the canbe is swimming through the large darudan
like a colourful dan
the canbe is our medicine
it opens up the seeds
in the daoure
sprouting more life

~

The fire is swimming through the large tree
like a colourful fish
the fire is our medicine
it opened up the seeds
in the earth
sprouting more life

Untitled

By Shaylah, Year 8

Moss Vale High School

Yana with me, Nga will show you the whambeyan
Let the winbin kurang reflect off the Dulang
Grow woonjeegaaribay grow
The bawa is our home
Tears like karrat overflow, my dear
My curayan holds my burrungilling words, refusing to tell
but share I will?
Who am I?
Who are you?
Where do I go from here?
No nabu to ask
I need to hide

~

Walk with me, I will show you the green valley
Let the morning cloud reflect off the river
Grow White Waratah grow
The bush is our home
Tears like rain overflow, my dear
My father holds my ancestors words, refusing to tell
But share I will
Who am I?
Who are you?
Where do I go from here?
No family to ask
I need to hide

Untitled

*By Emily, Year 9
Moss Vale High School*

Some people say I am not Aboriginal
I feel too white to be black
I feel like I don't connect, but I try
When I learn language and duwi it connects me,
I do tangara and I do art
It helps me to feel better about my identity

~

Some people say I am not Aboriginal
I feel too white to be black
I feel like I don't connect, but I try
When I learn language and dreaming it connects me,
I do dancing and I do art
It helps me to feel better about my identity

Untitled

*By Hannah
Moss Vale High School*

We don't talk about it
We don't talk about Aboriginal culture
in my family
It is almost like it doesn't exist
Except
at school
Where we come together for football
Where we go to university
Where we learn language
I leave with more questions
to ask my grandparents

Deep Water

*By Kye, Year 9
Moss Vale High School*

The long tooluan sneaks like Gundungurra as the guru gets closer
to the kedumba and the gugubara and the garrall screeches as the water falls

The daoure tells me
we are all beautiful in our own way

~

The long river sneaks like Gundungurra as the deep water gets closer
to the waterfall and the kookaburra and the black cockatoo screeches as the water falls

The land tells me
we are all beautiful in our own way

The Dulang

*By Adam, Year 7
Moss Vale High School*

I like swimming in a dulang
it makes me happy to swim in fresh water
the dulang has been here for a long time
I'm calmed while I lay floating on the guru
all my worries just wash away as I yarra

~

I like swimming in a river
it makes me happy to swim in fresh water
the river has been here for a long time
I'm clamed while I lay floating on the deep water
all my worries just wash away as I swim