MEDIA RELEASE

29 April 2019



Danny Allen, Illustration courtesy of David Cox and Pan Macmillan Australia

Phil Cummings: Stories behind the books at the State Library

Phil Cummings: Stories behind the books, now open at the State Library of South Australia, takes you into the creative mind of award-winning South Australian children's author Phil Cummings. From his first book, *Goodness Gracious!* to his latest award-winning picture book, *Boy*, Phil's career spans 30 years and more than 80 publications.

This interactive exhibition is presented by the State Library as part of the DreamBIG Children's Festival, and has been co-designed with children from Peterborough and Phil Cummings. Drawn from the State Library collections as well as Phil's personal materials and manuscripts, the exhibition is a rare opportunity to discover the secrets and stories behind Phil's approach to the creative process of writing.

The exhibition space is for kids to explore and for adults to be kids. A place to think about childhood, whether yours was 5 minutes, 5 years or 50 years ago! Visitors can discover first-hand how stories grow from notes and original ideas through many drafts, and the importance of characters, setting, language and plot in good storytelling.

The characters and worlds that Phil has created in his books are brought to life in the exhibition space, including a country chook shed reading space for children. Also recreated is the younger Phil's lounge room as he watched the history making Moon landing in 1969, which is the topic of his soon to be released book, *Touch the Moon*. Younger visitors can also explore storytelling

through the interactive side of the exhibition, including a giant lightbox sand table, writing ideas table and sculpture space.

Phil Cummings, says, "This year marks thirty years for me as a published author of children's books. I was born, raised and still live here in this wonderful state and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to share my journey with the people of South Australia. I hope this exhibition provides a greater understanding of the publishing process and encourages children and their families to explore the importance of reading, writing and sharing stories."

The State Library is pleased to have worked with the children from Peterborough and Phil Cummings to bring this delightful exhibition to the community. **Geoff Strempel**, Director State Library of South Australia, says, "Working with the Peterborough children was one of the most ambitious co-design projects we have done to date. Through this process the children developed a sense of storytelling and the possibilities available to them as current residents of Phil's childhood town. We've been able to show these children some of the treasures of the State Library. And a bonus for the Library has been the sense of connection that the children have formed with the State Library and its collections."

Phil Cummings: Stories behind the books, is an exhibition for anybody who is a child, has a child or ever was a child, and is on display at the State Library of South Australia until 21 July 2019.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

Phil Cummings will be available for media interviews and photos on **Wednesday 1 May 2019**, from **10.30 to 11.30am**, in the State Library Gallery, ground floor.

EXHIBITION DETAILS:

Phil Cummings: Stories behind the books
18 April - 21 July 2019
Open daily (except public holidays)
State Library of South Australia
Corner North Terrace and Kintore Avenue
Free entry

Gallery Opening Hours:
Monday to Wednesday: 10am to 7.45pm
Thursday and Friday: 10am to 5.45pm
Saturday and Sunday: 10am to 4.45pm

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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