

GriffithREVIEW

A QUARTERLY OF WRITING & IDEAS

TASMANIA

The Tipping Point?

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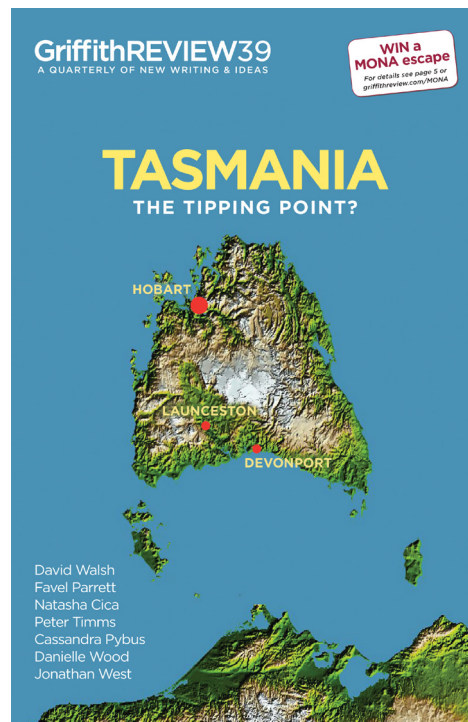
For many Tasmanians a darker reality lies behind the seductive tourism brochures showcasing the state's pristine wilderness, gourmet magazine articles celebrating its burgeoning food culture, and newspaper stories gasping at a world-leading art museum.

Tasmania ranks at or near the bottom among Australian states on virtually every indicator of socio-economic performance — including levels of employment, income, investment, education and health.

Where does Tasmania's future lie? Has Tasmania reached a 'tipping point', politically, economically and culturally?

In **TASMANIA – THE TIPPING POINT?** *Griffith REVIEW* serves up strategic slices of Tasmania's past, present and future. Thinkers, writers and doers from Tasmania and beyond, including members of its extensive diaspora, challenge how Tasmania is seen by outsiders and illuminate how Tasmanians see themselves, down home and in the wider world.

We travel from the fight for gay and Aboriginal rights, through economics and politics, to the demise of Gunns and new challenges on the Antarctic frontier. We spend time at kitchen tables and hear personal reflections on family history, working the land, and local hospital systems. We meet Tasmanian artists, entrepreneurs and small-scale farmers, hear the fascinating backstory of the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), and discover haunting fiction set on Bruny Island, freezing mountain lakes and windswept ferries.



Tasmania's geographical isolation, distinctive natural environment and smallness of social scale are increasingly seen as blessings, presenting marketable opportunities. Since the blockbusting arrival of MONA in Hobart, more people champion Tasmania's potential as a test bed for clever cultural, economic, environmental and social initiatives. To quote Peter Timms: 'Tasmania is compact and manageable enough to serve as a cultural laboratory — to be Australia's off-Broadway.'

Ensuring sustainable growth and pathways to new industries will demand tough decisions. There is a need for continued economic restructure, to build Tasmania's distinctive strengths in agriculture, science, food production, forestry and fisheries, tourism and culture, while encouraging those people with the ability and determination to make it happen.

Tasmania has been and continues to be the site of both extinctions and reinventions. The challenges it now faces are relevant to the whole nation. Why Tasmania still underperforms on so many fronts, and what might be done to change this, are important questions — not just for Tasmanians, but also for the nation as a whole. As a microcosm of non-metropolitan regions of Australia, it may well represent Australia's future.

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JULIE GOUGH Fugitive history

ABOUT THE EDITORS

JULIANNE SCHULTZ is the founding editor of *Griffith REVIEW*. She is on the boards of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Grattan Institute. She is the chair of the Australian Film Television and Radio School, the Queensland Design Council and the reference group on the National Cultural Policy, deputy chair of the Australian Council of Learned Academies Securing Australia's Future project and on advisory committees with a focus on education, media and Indigenous issues. She has been a judge of the Miles Franklin Award, Myer Foundation Fellowships and Walkley Awards. She is the author of *Reviving the Fourth Estate: Democracy, accountability and the media* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), *Steel City Blues* (Penguin, 1985) and the librettos *Black River* and *Going into Shadows*.

NATASHA CICA is director of the Inglis Clark Centre for Civil Society at the University of Tasmania, which advances the university's community engagement and thought leadership agenda. In 2012 she was awarded an inaugural Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship. Natasha has worked as a lawyer, political adviser and policy analyst in Europe and Australia. She was the founding editor of *newmatilda.com* and established the consultancy Periwinkle Projects. Her recent book is *Pedder Dreaming: Olegas Truchanas and A Lost Tasmanian Wilderness* (UQP, 2011). Natasha has previously contributed to *Griffith REVIEW*.

THE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS ARE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

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