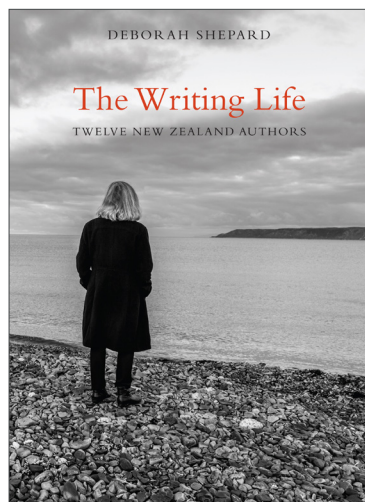




# The Writing Life

## Twelve New Zealand Authors

DEBORAH SHEPARD



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### CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH TWELVE WRITERS WHO HELPED SHAPE NEW ZEALAND LITERATURE

A unique, candid and intimate survey of the life and work of twelve of our most acclaimed writers: Patricia Grace, Tessa Duder, Owen Marshall, Philip Temple, David Hill, Joy Cowley, Vincent O'Sullivan, Albert Wendt, Marilyn Duckworth, Chris Else, Fiona Kidman and Witi Ihimaera.

Constructed as Q&As with experienced oral historian Deborah Shepard, they offer a marvellous insight into their careers. As a group they are now the 'elders' of New Zealand literature; they forged the path for the current generation.

Together the authors trace their publishing and literary history from 1959 to 2018, through what might now be viewed as a golden era of publishing into the more unsettled climate of today. They address universal themes: the death of parents and loved ones, the good things that come with ageing, mortality, the components of a satisfying life, the joy of writing, and much more. And they give advice on writing.

The book has an historical continuity, showing fruitful and fascinating links between individuals who have negotiated the same literary terrain for more than sixty years. To further honour them are magnificent photo portraits by distinguished photographer John McDermott, commissioned by the publisher for this project.

*'Deborah, the greatest compliment I can pay you is this: if I was a young writer starting out now, I'd be eagerly devouring this book.'* — Tessa Duder

*'If you love the work of the authors, if you're interested in the writing process or as a kind of collected biography of New Zealand society . . . it works on all of those levels.'* — Louise O'Brien, RNZ Nine to Noon

*'I love this book. I love the way it returns me to writing I am familiar with and lives that I am not. It reminds me that the writing process is addictive, sustaining and for many a necessary joy.'* — Paula Green, NZ Poetry Shelf

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Deborah Shepard** is an author, teacher of memoir, oral historian and film and art historian. She has also been a Film, TV and Media Studies lecturer at the University of Auckland. Her major publications include *Her Life's Work: Conversations with Five New Zealand Women* (2009), *Between the Lives: Partners in Art* (2005), *Reframing Women: History of New Zealand Film* (2000), and *Giving Yourself to Life: A Journal of Pain, Hope and Renewal* (2015). Deborah teaches Introductory and Master classes in Memoir, Journal Writing and Biography at the University of Auckland Public Programmes and is a life writing mentor for the New Zealand Society of Authors. Deborah lives in Westmere, Auckland.

### SALES POINTS

- The book is warm, celebratory, revealing, generous and wide ranging.
- Developed and expanded from a series of interviews for the New Zealand Society of Authors.
- A must have for all those who admire their writing, and for schools, libraries and creative writing courses.
- A substantial and intelligent tribute to twelve writers who have made a massive contribution to New Zealand literature and have paved the way for others.
- Full bibliographies and first covers of all their books complete the text.
- Marvellous photographs of each author, especially taken by John McDermott, including of each of their writing spaces.

