

April 2026

Kia ora koutou,

I'm going to be a clique and say- *how is it nearly May already!* It's been great to see members making the most of our new opening hours on a Friday. Thank you to those who have given positive feedback about this. If you do visit the library after hours and can see the lights on, and the door is unlocked, please feel free to come in, as I will be here.

I am off to Melbourne for the first half of May for the Literary Programmers Roundtable. I will be sharing my experiences of this exciting trip in the next newsletter. We are fortunate to have Saskia Leek back in to cover the library duties while I am away.

Ngā mihi nui

Holly

What's Happening

We are organising a series of creative writing workshops. These will be run over a period of three months, possibly longer. Start date is set for later in June.

Workshops will be free of charge- made possible by the City of Literature. There will be limited places., maximum 10 people per workshop.

Please get in touch if you would like to participate.

We are almost out of our limited addition tote bags. They are strong and perfect for hauling books or groceries about.

\$20.00 each.



Book Review

One Aladdin Two Lamps Jeannette Winterson

Winterson's new non-fiction book is a mixture of memoir, history, philosophy and politics woven loosely into commentary about the Middle Eastern Folk tales of 'One Thousand and One Nights'. This approach to non-fiction writing is brilliant and makes reading Winterson's book an enriching and thought-provoking experience.

At times the book is quite personal, she writes about being adopted and how she was raised in the Pentecostal Church to become a Christian missionary. To how she wasn't allowed to read books as a child and what it was like to meet her birth mother. She also writes about the importance of reading and storytelling. How social media is a

weapon of mass distraction... shrink(ing) the human mind to its smallest scope. How reading demands our full attention and has the potential to wake up our soul.

The tales from One Thousand and One Nights are interwoven throughout as Winterson examines the role of Sharhrazed, the intelligent heroine and narrator of these tales, who tells her husband, the emperor, a tale each night in hope of prolonging her life. Winterson argues that Shahrazad- *changes her predicament holds out hope for a progressive politics currently losing ground to "radical-rightwing thuggery"*. "A better story starts with a better story..... Reason will not win the day. Without imagination nothing changes.



The book is bursting with ideas that are brought to life, and tickle the imagination, because of these wonderfully dark folk tales. *Literature allows complexity, but complexity doesn't mean obscurity. Literature doesn't mean boring. What we are hoping for-well, what I am hoping for – is a piece of work with the power to captivate us on many levels. Which is exactly what One Aladdin Two Lamps achieves.*