

PRESS RELEASE

Announcing the winner of the 2023 New England Writers' Centre Fellowship

In partnership with Varuna, The National Writers' House, the New England Writers' Centre is delighted to announce Matthew Tighe as the winner of the 2023 Varuna-New England Writers' Centre Fellowship.

The Fellowship, to be taken up in 2024, will give Matt a week's inspirational writing residency in the beautiful surroundings of Varuna, in the Blue Mountains. It includes full board and accommodation at Varuna, funds towards travel, a one-on-one consultation with a Varuna expert and more.

This is the fifth year of the Fellowship. The inaugural year, in 2019, was supported by a generous grant from the Copyright Agency.

Chosen by Varuna's team from a shortlist previously selected by judges from the New England Writers' Centre, Matt's winning submission included an extract from his steampunk/police procedural manuscript *Trilby and the Case of the Brittlebury Bottle*, which he will be working on during his residency. Matt's submission was praised by the judges as "Unique and engaging! Highly readable."

Varuna's Executive Director, Veechi Stuart, said: "We loved the freshness, quirk and originality of Matthew's submission. Congratulations Matt! We look forward to seeing you for your residency in 2024."

"We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Matt on this outstanding accomplishment," stated Sophie Masson, chair of the New England Writers' Centre. "Both his draft and project plan displayed remarkable strength, and we are absolutely thrilled to announce him as the recipient of the 2023 Fellowship to work on his debut novel."

Reacting to news of his win, Matt said, "I'm amazed and honoured to be selected for the 2023 Varuna-NEWC Fellowship. This is a wonderful opportunity and I'd like to thank the judges, the New England Writer's Centre, and all involved. I'd also like to congratulate Rachel Bowman on her shortlisting. Her historical fiction work sounds amazing and I look forward to seeing it published. For me, a week of dedicated time and the support the fellowship offers is invaluable. I cannot wait for people to see my genre-bending 'The Case of the Brittlebury Bottle' in its final form."

Varuna and the New England Writers' Centre warmly congratulate Matthew Tighe for winning the 2023 Varuna-New England Writers' Centre Fellowship and wish him a wonderful week at Varuna in 2024.

We also congratulate Rachel Bowman on her excellent achievement in being shortlisted for the Fellowship this year, and wish her all the best with her future projects.

For more information on the Fellowship and this year's winner, Matt Tighe, visit <https://www.newc.org.au/varuna-fellowship-2023.html> or contact the NEWC's Program Manager at newcprogrammanager@gmail.com

New England Writers' Centre

Varuna Fellowship



2023
WINNER

Matthew Tighe

for

Trilby and the Case of
the Brittlebury Bottle

Steampunk/Police Procedural

Trilby is a trainee constable in a world of ghost powered mechanical devices. He finds himself investigating a series of crimes that suggest his father is at the centre of a conspiracy that has resurrected a monster.

"Unique & engaging"
"Highly readable!"

Matthew (Matt) Tighe lives on a farm in northern NSW with his wife and children. He writes speculative fiction and his work has appeared in Nature Futures, The NoSleep Podcast, Daily Science Fiction, Cossmass Infinities, Cast of Wonders, Etherea Magazine, and other places. He is the recipient of the 2021 Australian Shadows Award for short fiction, and is a twice-over finalist for both the Ditmar and Aurealis Awards. He won the 2022 Conflux Short Story Competition and the 2022 Arcanist Magazine Halloween Flash Fiction Competition, and has received honourable mentions or commendations in other fiction competitions. He is an environmental scientist in his other life, researching pollution, data science, and environmental sustainability.