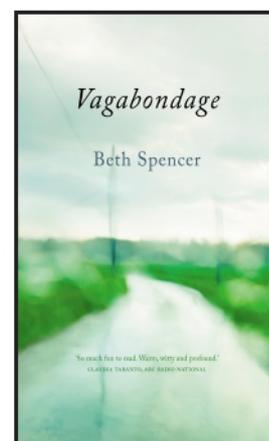


UWA Publishing

Media Release

Release date: 1 October 2014

Vagabondage Beth Spencer



ISBN 9781742586342
\$24.99 pb 152 pages

The year she turned fifty Beth Spencer decided to sell her beloved house and garden in country Victoria and move back to the city. However by the time her property sold, prices in Melbourne had boomed and she could no longer afford a flat. So she bought a campervan — a 'cubby house on wheels'.

Vagabondage is the story of this journey into the pleasures and challenges of being in service to freedom.

A poignant, sharp and funny meditation on belonging, the poems circle back and forth between family, relationships, memory and desire; tracking the often-fine line between solitude and loneliness, the pull of what we possess and what possesses us, and the elusive idea of 'home'.

In exploring the ways in which we find (or lose) a sense of belonging - who we are, and how we are - Spencer's collection traces the shifting and textured landscape of the self as it is constantly montaged and re-inscribed within our relationships with others, our culture and our own histories.

This is a long-awaited book from 'a writer of exceptional sensitivity, precision and courage' (Peter Bishop). It is a unique memoir that, as ABC Radio National producer Claudia Taranto puts it, is 'so much fun to read — warm, witty and profound.'

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Beth Spencer's writing has never fallen neatly within conventional categories. (Fiona Capp once referred to her as a 'literary anarchist'.) Her first book, *Things in a Glass Box* (FIP, 1994) was poetry, followed by the critically acclaimed *How to Conceive of a Girl* (Vintage/ Random House, 1996) which was fiction with a poetic edge.

Her ABC sound-and-text pieces - from programs such as *The Listening Room*, *Radio Eye*, *Life Matters* and *Poetica* - have been collected on a double audio CD called *Body of Words* (Dogmedia, 2004). She has also had essays, opinion pieces and articles widely published in newspapers and academic journals. In this new book she tells her story through the medium of poems and photographs.

She was runner up for the Steele Rudd Award for *How to Conceive of a Girl*; is a past Age Short Story Award winner; was the Inaugural Dinny O'Hearn Fellow; and was awarded a PhD in 2006.

Beth now lives in a small house on the Central Coast of NSW in a land-lease village. She has a desk again (and her own kitchen and bathroom!) and a compact verandah patrolled by water dragons. 'Vandelicious', her Toyota Hiace high-top campervan, has moved on to new owners and new adventures.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

INTERVIEWS * EXTRACTS * IMAGES * REVIEW COPIES are available
please contact KIRI FALLS of UWA Publishing

tel: 08 6488 6806 or 0428 136 847

kiri.falls@uwa.edu.au

35 Stirling Highway, Crawley
Western Australia 6009
www.uwap.uwa.edu.au

