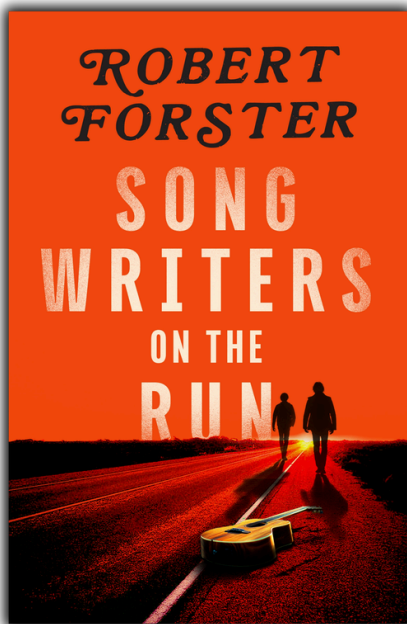


SONGWRITERS ON THE RUN

ROBERT FORSTER

'A comic odyssey, a crime thriller and a nuts-and-bolts account of making art. Not bad for one book!' PAUL KELLY



Robert Forster, singer-songwriter and co-founder of the iconic and internationally acclaimed band, The Go-Betweens, has spent nearly five decades shaping the Australian music industry. Now, in his scintillating fiction debut, Robert takes readers into the netherworld of Australia's independent music scene for a rollicking rock-and-roll joyride.

Set in 1991, on the cusp of Nirvana's grunge revolution, *Songwriters on the Run* follows Mick Woods and Drew Lovelock, two rock-star-wrecked handsome, not-quite-famous singer-songwriters touring Central Queensland. When a minor marijuana bust turns ugly, the two find themselves suddenly incarcerated in a low-security prison in the middle of nowhere. With the help of fellow inmates, they escape. While on the run, desperately trying to evade the law and clear their names, a major film star in Hollywood takes a liking to their music, unaware of the chaos surrounding its creators.

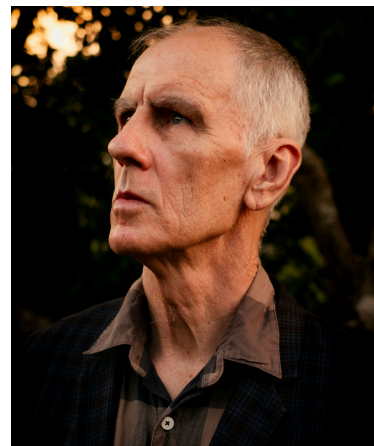
Robert's career has long been defined by writing - from the songs that made him a household name to his award-winning music commentary in *The Monthly*. A collection of his journalism, *The 10 Rules of Rock and Roll*, was published in 2009, followed by his memoir *Grant & I* in 2016, which offered an intimate portrait of his friendship with The Go-Betweens co-founder, Grant McLennan. In *Songwriters on the Run*, Robert draws on his experience as both musician and writer to capture a defining moment in Australian indie music, when bands built their followings the hard way: town by town, pub by pub, song by song. It recalls a pre-digital world of mixtapes, long drives, press clippings and whispered industry promises.

For generations of fans, from devoted listeners of The Go-Betweens to readers of his journalism and memoir, Robert Forster's debut novel offers something deeply familiar yet newly electric, brought to life in thrilling fiction. It is a sharply funny love letter to creative persistence and artistic partnership that is as silly, profound and grand as the time and music it celebrates.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Forster is a Brisbane-born and based musician and writer. In 1978 he co-founded, with friend and fellow singer-songwriter Grant McLennan, the internationally acclaimed rock band, The Go-Betweens. Their sixth album, *16 Lovers Lane*, was placed at number 12 on The 100 Best Australian Albums list, and their ninth and last, *Oceans Apart*, won the 2005 ARIA award for Best Adult Contemporary Album. In 2010, Brisbane honoured their cultural influence by naming a new river bridge the Go Between Bridge.

Robert's parallel career as a writer began in 2005 when he was appointed music critic for *The Monthly*, and a year later he won the Geraldine Pascall Prize. A collection of his journalism, *The 10 Rules of Rock and Roll*, was published in 2009. In 2015, his alma mater, the University of Queensland, awarded him an honorary Doctor of Letters. Robert's memoir, *Grant & I*, was published in 2016.



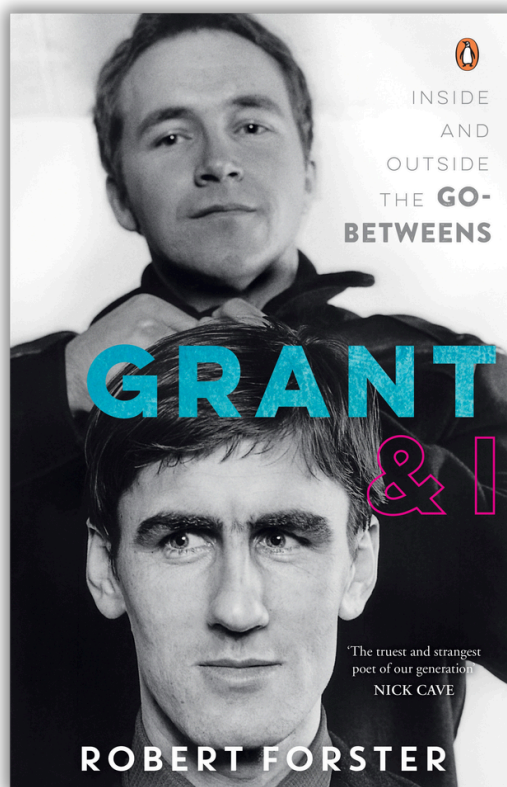
PRAISE FOR *GRANT & I*

'The main focus is as admirable as it is surprising. Forster's topic is rarely himself or McLennan. Instead, it's the stuff of which their days were made, the music of The Go-Betweens... Forster is not at all sentimental about their friendship, until he has to be... And their relationship is not at all dramatic, until, of course, it is, at which point, it is gutting, sudden and tragic.' [The Saturday Paper](#)

'The heart of Forster's story is deeper and more poetically drawn than simple band autobiography, however. It's the unveiling of a friendship, a partnership, even a love affair, of sorts, that ended in tragic circumstances... His natural talent for the written word blossoms from almost every page of this colourful account of his relationship with McLennan... Forster writes from the heart.' [Weekend Australian](#)

'*Grant & I* is a beautifully written book... You long to hear McLennan's voice, to view the band, and Forster, through his eyes. There is still, even after McLennan's death, a sense of potential about this relationship.' [Los Angeles Review of Books](#)

'Forster's half of the tale is passionate, funny, unflinchingly honest and ultimately very moving in the hours of his friend's strange, tragically premature passing... What we have in *The Go-Betweens* is a beautiful puzzle that invites imagination to rule.' [The Saturday Age](#)



'The truest and strangest poet of his generation.'
[Nick Cave](#)

'His writing is sharp, with an undercurrent of ironic humour but, when it comes to the big moment with which the book climaxes, he handles it with emotional precision... You can read this as a book about the music industry. You can read it as a book about the mysterious synergies of art. Or you can read it as a book about the non-erotic love that can exist between men.' [The Age](#)

'This moving memoir... is a fascinating glimpse into a life richly lived and a key friendship along the way... [Forster] has gone on to honour his departed friend in many ways and now, importantly, with this warm, witty and at times searingly honest book.' [The Courier-Mail](#)

Forster's account is melancholic, cheery, and self-deprecating all at once. It is often unruly and mischievous as well. Rather than presenting a stock-standard Australian success story, *Grant & I* offers up the tangled lives of two kindred spirits who decided to make music together.'
[Australian Book Review](#)

