

Sofie Laguna

AUTHOR

Sofie Laguna originally studied to be a lawyer, but after deciding law was not for her, she trained as an actor. Sofie began her writing career as an author for children and has written over twenty books for young people. Her work has been published in the US, the UK and in translation throughout Europe and Asia. She has been shortlisted for the Queensland Premier's Award, and twice been awarded Honour Book by the Children's Book Council of Australia.

Sofie's second novel for adults, *The Eye of the Sheep* won the 2015 Miles Franklin Award. It was also shortlisted for the Stella Prize, and longlisted for the IMPAC Dublin IMPAC International Literary Award. *The Eye of the Sheep* has been optioned for film.

Sofie's first novel for adults, *One Foot Wrong* released in 2008, was published throughout Europe, the US and the UK, was longlisted for the Miles Franklin Award and shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Award.

In 2017 Sofie released her third novel for adults. *The Choke* won best novel in the 2018 Indie Awards, was shortlisted for the Victorian Premier Literary Awards, the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal Award, the ABIA Award, the Voss Award, and longlisted for the Kibble Award, the Stella Award and the Dublin IMPAC International Literary Award. The Melbourne Theatre Company has optioned theatrical rights.

Sofie's new novel for adults, *Infinite Splendours*, is scheduled for release in October 2020. She continues to write for young people, and in 2021 she will release her next novel for children, *The Song of Lewis Carmichael*, followed by a picture book, *When You Are Older*.

Sofie Laguna regularly presents to both children and adults.

"Thank You, Sofie was absolutely delightful - warm, passionate and a lovely person - it was a joy to have her here" – Gannawarra Library



BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES:

Nexus Arts www.nexusarts.com.au

Phone 03 9528 3416 Freecall 1800 675 897

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Writing Workshops for Adults

Creating Compelling Characters

Sofie will focus on different ways participants can create compelling and original characters with engaging stories to tell. Workshops will open with a discussion about character where Sofie uses her own work as a springboard to stimulate ideas, and to encourage students to identify memorable characters in their own reading history. She will then use a 'brainstorming exercise' where the group works together to create a character and his or her world. Sofie will demonstrate that the answers to the challenges of plot, tone, structure and style often lie in knowledge of character.

Participants will be asked to bring a 500-word dramatic monologue to the workshop, written in the voice of one of their characters. All participants will be encouraged to read out the work and receive constructive criticism.

Sofie will ask participants to consider their characters in unexpected ways in order to deepen their understanding of, and passion for their stories.

Elements of the Novel

Sofie will examine the elements of the novel – character, plot, voice, tone, and structure, and how these elements intersect. Sofie will give participants strategies that will address problems in every element, mainly through knowledge of character.

Participants will be asked to bring a 500-word piece of writing to the workshop. All participants will be encouraged to read out the work and receive constructive criticism.

Picture Books for Children

Sofie will explore the relationship between text and image - looking at the way language can successfully make space for illustration. Using a number of popular picture books, Sofie will ask participants to consider the elements that make picture books work – rhythm, energy, tone and structure. And of course, story. Participants will be asked to bring their picture book stories to the session, and these stories will then be shared with the group for constructive feedback.



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Sofie Laguna – Feedback

Sofie was brilliant. The feedback from teachers, parents and students was that they were thrilled with the content of her talk. She was so natural, authentic and reflective about her writing. She had students from year 5-12, parents and teachers as audience and she pitched her talk perfectly. She was prompt and completely professional. We were so very impressed.

—*J. Harkness, Roseville College*

We had great feedback from the audience and they were very engaged especially during the Q&A time. Mark and Sofie were very generous with their answers. They were both very warm, professional and generous. Mark and Sofie were both very communicative leading up to the event and punctual on the evening. —*N.Koch, Yarra Libraries*

“Just awesome!” “Spot on” “Really hit the mark” “She had them (the children) eating out of her hand.” These are just of the few amongst many comments that the teachers said about Sofie. I have just heard nothing but positive feedback about Sofie. Please let her know how very pleased our teachers and children were about her visit. We highly recommend Sofie!

—*T. Stoove, St Mary's Primary School Greensborough,*

We thoroughly enjoyed Sofie’s visit. Everyone had a fantastic time, Sofie is a brilliant speaker. I will look at ways to continue the collaboration with Sofie.

—*R. Nelson, Bannockburn Primary School, Bannockburn*

Just wanted to let you know Sophie Laguna finished her workshops today with the 5/6 classes—she was great! Really engaging with the students, and the teachers were very happy with the content. Thanks for the recommendation! —*S. Allan, Balwyn Primary School*

We have just enjoyed Sofie Laguna’s visit here at Corpus Christi. She has certainly inspired the children in their writing and reading. Sofie’s presentation was very engaging for all children from Prep through to Year 6. —*J. Wilkinson, Corpus Christi*

The girls in Prep, Year 1 and Year 2 each had a session with award winning author, Sofie Laguna. During these sessions, she shared lots with us about her writing experiences. Sofie was a big fan of acting until one day she heard a story from a friend, and her life changed forever. She changed from being an actor and became an author! She sent her first story to five publishers, and luckily the last one replied that they would publish her first book. We learnt three important things from Sofie: Follow your dreams, be patient, and don’t stop having a go at new things! —*Students, Ivanhoe Girls Grammar*

Sofie spoke to students in Prep – Year 2. She was very engaging and professional in her delivery. The students were interested in what she had to say and she held their attention for most of the 50 minute session (a difficult feat for prep students). Sofie explained very clearly the role of the publisher, putting it in simple terms and relating it to her personal experience. This is often a difficult concept for the younger students to understand, but Sofie explained it very clearly and simply. She had a lovely warm manner with the students and quickly established a great rapport with them.

We had Sofie visit our school a number of years ago and she was great. Once again, we weren’t disappointed. She is a very talented speaker. I would definitely recommend Sofie and we would love to have her back in the future.

—*M. Muse, Teacher-Librarian, Overnewton Anglican Community College*



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