

FOREWORD

NAM LE

WRITER

Nam Le has made a name for himself writing exotic short stories and now he is thinking hard about his first novel.

Le's writing has been widely anthologised and his first book – *The Boat*, a collection of short stories – is published in Australia next month. It follows no particular theme and wanders widely around the world. One story is set in Colombia. Another is about teenage boys living in an Australian fishing town. Yet another is set on a damaged boat carrying Vietnamese refugees bound for a better life.

The 29-year-old former lawyer exhaustively researched his stories, and in at least one of them twists fact into fiction, leaving the reader floundering. "It's not a non-fiction book by any means," says Le, who was born in Vietnam and raised in Melbourne. "I'm not so concerned with getting everything right, because what is 'getting everything right' anyway?"

Perhaps that's why he abandoned his career as a lawyer "pretty much as soon as I started" in 2004, and set sail for the United States, where he studied for a fine arts masters degree in writing in Iowa. These days he spends his time reading, writing and thinking as the writer-in-residence at an exclusive preparatory school in New Hampshire and as fiction editor of the *Harvard Review*.

His plan is to continue to tap into much-touted American philanthropy to fund his life's work. "I just thank my lucky stars that there were role models out there like J.K. Rowling who made some Vietnamese parents think that writing might be a financially viable option."

Report Sian Powell

Photography Stuart Ramson



"Laura and I announced George... declared George... wink to understandab... game show contestan... The Leader of the Fre... making a cameo appe... No Deal last month in... of support for Kobes... Iraq war vet. A few se... exposure to Bush and... transport officer – wh... three tours of duty in... too, did the show's ra... per cent below its sea...

Days later, pundits... figure out what Bush... even whether. Only Ja... explanation – that he... *Are You Smarter than... seemed to fit the facts... time, Bush's personal... been setting new reco... month by CNN and Ga... the highest disapprov... presidential polling hi... out of 10 Americans v...*

In the same week t... taking US presidential... record-breaking low, V... leader and seat-sniffe... was doing his bit here... State of Excitement, p... **when it comes to... egotism and she... WA really can co... world stage.**

After 13 statement... "unsubstantiated rum... that he'd sniffed appr... vacated chair of a fem... Buswell – much like t... tampering with on a L... last year – finally snap... a breathless media. H...

Buswell describes... practising Catholic – i... only undoing unto oth... man. In a profile writt... seat-sniffing story bro... *West Australian*: "I ca... a person who has a m... career in politics." An... which way the wind is...

Whether attempts... his political future wit... anyone's guess, thoug... who looked to him as... air in an otherwise st... state opposition have... put out of joint. In all... hang about like a bad... next election, when...