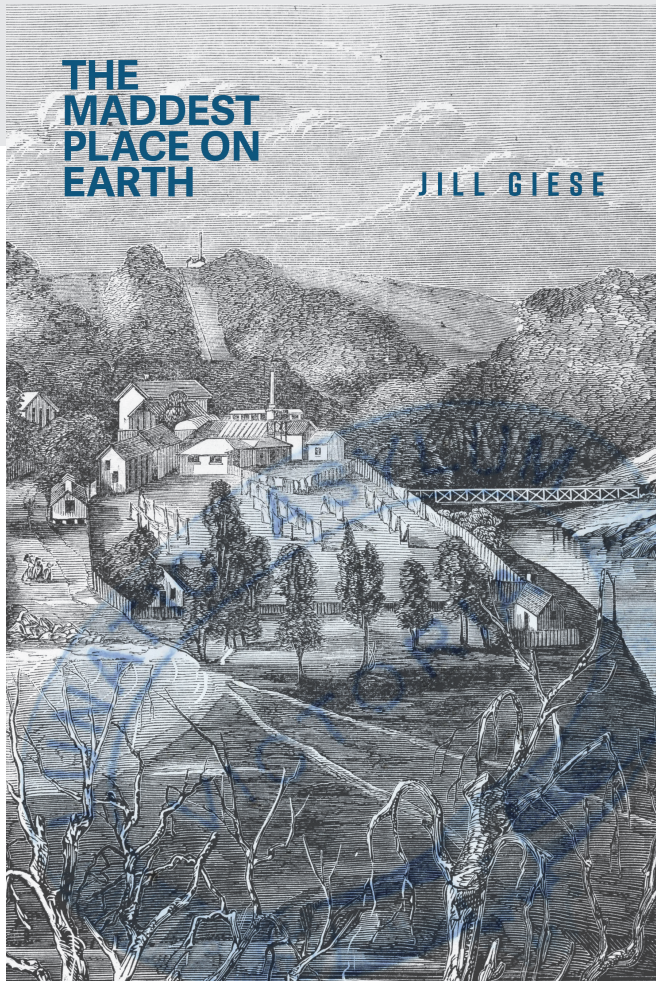


ADVANCE INFORMATION

THE MADDEST PLACE
ON EARTH

Jill Giese

Gold-fuelled Melbourne was booming, but dwelling in the fault lines of the proud young colony was an alarming fact – Victoria had the highest rate of insanity in the world. Was it the antipodean sun, gold mania, excessive masturbation, the heady pace of modern life?

The true story of colonial Victoria's quest to cure insanity unfolds through the lives of three English newcomers – a gifted artist, exiled from his homeland for his madness; an ambitious doctor, bringing enlightened treatment ideals to his post in charge of the overflowing asylum; and a mysterious undercover journalist, who sensationally exposed the lunatics' plight in Melbourne's press.

Amid the clamour of fraught endeavours and maddened minds, the story reveals unexpected hope, creativity and ennobling humanity – and surprising contemporary relevance as we continue to grapple with this ancient human malady.

Format: Paperback
Released: April 2018
ISBN: 978-1-925588-95-8
Price: \$39.95

Jill Giese is a clinical psychologist and writer, whose extensive career in mental health encompasses many years of clinical practice and executive roles in policy and advocacy.

Australian Scholarly Publishing PTY LTD

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