

THE WRITERS' CONFERENCE

The Writers Conference 2020

Programme

For more detail on each of the activities, scroll down to the bottom of the document for a full description and biographies of the speakers.

SLOT ONE

- **Creative Writing in Communities PANEL**

Chair: Aimee Wilkinson

Panel: Jamie Thrasivoulou; Emteaz Hussain; Michelle Hubbard

- **The Long and Short of it: Writing Short Stories PANEL**

Panel: Giselle Leeb; Shreya Sen-Handley; Dan Powell

- **Writing for Wellbeing WORKSHOP**

with Miggy Angel

- **Troubador Self-Publishing: From Manuscript to Market TALK**

with Jonathan White

SLOT TWO

- **The Power of Poetry PANEL**

Chair: Anne Holloway

Panel: Panya Banjoko; Sue Dymoke, John Berkavitch.

- **Writing For Children & Young People PANEL**

Chair: Sian Tower

Panel: Gareth Peter; Kerry Drewery; Davinia Andrew-Lynch

- **Level Up: Meeting the expectations of disabled writers PANEL**

Chair: Trevor Wright

Panel: Maresa Mackeith; Neal Pike

- **Accidental Memoir WORKSHOP**

with Anthony Cropper

SLOT THREE

- **Writing Time PANEL**

Chair: Judith Alnatt

Panel: Rebecca Mascull; Kerry Young

- **Making Money from Your Writing PANEL**

Chair: Stephen Booth

Panel: Andrew Graves; Shreya Sen-Handley

- **Ready, Steady, Pitch: Preparing Your Manuscript for Publication TALK**

with Aki Schilz

- **Using Psychology to Create Compelling Characters WORKSHOP**

with Kira-Anne Pelican

SLOT FOUR

- **The Publishing Process PANEL**

Chair: Theo Jones

Panel: Kate Barker, Oli Munson; Stuart Bartholomew

- **Cartography For Writers: how to navigate the landscapes we create PANEL**

Chair: TBC

Panel: Dr Sue Healy; Daniele Pantano; Sarah Stovell; Dr Guy Mankowski; Dr Chris Dows

- **Space to Shine: Arts Council England Funding Opportunities TALK**

with Arts Council England's Peter Stones

SLOT ONE

Creative Writing in Communities

Working as a writer in the community brings its own rewards and its challenges. In our competitive writing world, it can be a very lucrative way of not only sustaining a living as a writer, but also building a wider audience for a writer's work. However, working within the community can require compassion, innovation, flexibility and confidence. How do you build your own project and find partnerships to help projects grow? Join our panel of professional writers as they share their experiences of working within different community settings and the lessons they have learned.

Chair: Aimee Wilkinson

Panel: Jamie Thrasivoulou; Emteaz Hussain; Michelle Hubbard

Aimee Wilkinson is Head of Artistic Development at Writing East Midlands.

Jamie Thrasivoulou is an award-winning writer, poet, and educator. He's the official poet for Derby County FC. He has performed all over the UK. The BBC and National Poetry Day have commissioned his work amongst others.

Emteaz Hussain delivers workshop facilitation for statutory and community groups nationally including care leavers, drug and alcohol projects, Asian women's projects and pupil referral units. Current commissions: Adaptation of Crongton Knights; play based on the Rotherham Scandal for the Royal Court.

Michelle Hubbard is a poet, writer, storyteller, African drummer, workshop facilitator based in Nottingham. Passionate about the written and spoken word. Founder member of Blackdrop spoken word night. Performing regularly/supporting Nottingham's open mic scene.

The Long and Short of it: Writing Short Stories

The ability to write a short story, and write it well, is invaluable to any fiction writer. Writing short stories can develop creative and critical skills, build portfolios and further your understanding of different genres and potential readerships. They can also provide opportunity for paid commissions, competition submissions and the experience of working with professional editors. Join three professional writers as they discuss their different approaches to this writing discipline, and how you can break into this market.

Chair: Alex Davies

Panel: Giselle Leeb; Shreya Sen-Handley; Dan Powell

Giselle Leeb's short stories have appeared in over thirty publications including Best British Short Stories 2017 (Salt), Mslexia, Ambit, The Lonely Crowd, and other places She is a Word Factory Apprentice 2019 and an assistant editor at Reckoning Journal.

Shreya Sen-Handley, author of two books with HarperCollins, the award-winning 'Memoirs of My Body' and the recently published 'Strange: Stories', is also a Welsh National Opera librettist, international media columnist, creative writing teacher, and illustrator.

Dan Powell is a prize-winning author of short fiction, a Doctoral Researcher in Creative Writing and a First Story writer-in-residence. His debut collection, *Looking Out of Broken Windows*, was shortlisted for the Scott Prize.

Writing for Wellbeing

This workshop will explore 'writing for well-being', with a focus on identifying the various stages of writing as personal aid, providing practical support and encouragement for attendees journeys from writing for well-becoming to well-being.'

Miggy Angel is the author of the poetry collections *Grime Kerbstone Psalms* published by Celandor Books, and *Extreme Violets* published by Hi Vis Press. He is the host and organiser of the monthly poetry event *Speech Therapy*, the facilitator of the *Do Or Die Poets* (a weekly creative writing workshop for people in addiction recovery) and is the editor and founder of *Burning House Press*.

Troubador Self-Publishing: From Manuscript to Market

This session will give a general overview of the different options an author can take if they decide to publish a book through the 'self-publishing' route. It will also give an explanation of the different services a company like Troubador can offer if an author does require help with this type of publishing. Come and explore the different areas you should consider if you do want to self-publish, and the skills you will need to have if you take on this route to publication.

Jonathan White - before joining Troubador in 2017, Jonathan worked in many different roles within the book industry. He ran several major bookshops in London including Dillons Trafalgar Square and Stanfords. In the publishing world he was Sales & Marketing Director at Anova as well as roles at OUP, Chrysalis and Phaidon.

SLOT TWO

The Power of Poetry

Poetry comes in many guises and our panellists are as diverse in their outlook and experience as they are in their style of writing. We ask them what it is about poetry that draws them to it, and how it informs their work in general. Can anyone learn to be a poet and can writing poetry make us better writers?

Chair: Anne Holloway

Panel: Panya Banjoko; Sue Dymoke, John Berkavitch.

Anne Holloway is the conference co-ordinator for Writing East Midlands. She is founding editor at Big White Shed independent press and delivers creative writing workshops in schools and community settings.

Panya Banjoko is a writer, multi-award winning poet, PhD candidate, at Nottingham Trent University, and patron for Nottingham City of Literature. Her debut collection, *Some Things*, was published by Burning Eye Books in 2018.

Sue Dymoke is a poet and Associate Professor at Nottingham Trent University. Publications include *Making Poetry Happen: Transforming the poetry classroom* (2015, Bloomsbury) and *What They Left Behind* (2018, Shoestring Press). Further information at suedymokepoetry.com.

John Berkavitch is a former UK Slam Poetry Champion and Acclaimed Theatre maker. AKA Owen craven-Griffiths - the Midlands Producer for Apples and Snakes

Writing For Children & Young People

Children and young adults can be the most rewarding and in their own unique way, demanding of audiences. But what makes a book stand out in this highly competitive genre? What are the particular considerations you need to take into account when writing for this potentially lucrative market? Should you write in rhyme, illustrate your own work or change language for the age that you're writing for? And are there any subjects which 'no go' areas for children and young people to understand? Join our panel of experienced writers and agent to find out what makes writing for young people so interesting.

Chair: Sian Tower

Panel: Gareth Peter; Kerry Drewery; Davinia Andrew-Lynch

Sian Tower is Education Manager at Writing East Midlands. She is a qualified teacher and Young Writer's Group leader, and runs writing workshops for all ages as well as a copywriting business from her base in the Peak District.

Gareth Peter is an author and stay-at-home dad, living in Nottingham with his partner, two huskies and their two adopted children. It was the arrival of his own children that inspired Gareth to begin writing picture books. In 2018 Gareth was selected as one of finalists onto the Penguin Write Now mentoring scheme.

Kerry Drewery - A multi-award winning author, Kerry's sixth novel – *The Last Paper Crane* - is published in April. Set in modern-day Japan and the Hiroshima bomb it's the story of Mizuki, her Grandfather, and promises spanning generations.

Davinia Andrew-Lynch is founder of ANDLYN, a boutique agency dedicated to finding storytellers whose material can not only exist on the page but can also find an outlet through other media territories.

Level Up: Meeting the expectations of disabled writers

The Social Model Writers Group was set up in Nottingham in 2016 to both provide mutual support to disabled writers and provide a platform for further development. It is based on the principle that it is not someone's condition that is disabling, it is the rigid, attitudes, policies and procedures and environments of society that can be disabling. Three Social Model group members, all now published writers, will talk about their own journeys as disabled writers to help stimulate this debate and begin to generate solutions to enable more opportunities for disadvantaged people. How do we enable disabled writers to contribute on an equal basis?

Chair: Trevor Wright

Panel: Maresa Mackeith; Neal Pike

Trevor Wright is originally from Nottingham and works part time in social care specialising in autism. After his own diagnosis he set up the Social Model Writers Group to provide peer support and access to opportunities for disabled writers. He is a regular performer at poetry events in the Midlands, the Director of the Derby Poetry Festival and has worked on the WEM Local:Vocal and Elder Tree writing for wellbeing projects. His first poetry collection, *Outsider Heart* was published by Big White Shed in 2016 and his second collection, *Salt Flow* in 2019.

Maresa Mackeith is a poet, educator and activist. She is a member of Quiet Riot, an international collective of disabled people who use non-verbal forms of communication. Her work is in several publications, and she has published two collections of poetry.

Neal Pike is a poet/writer/theatre maker/workshop leader and has had one book and a play script published by Big White Shed and is founder of Tentacles a disability writers collective based in Nottingham

Accidental Memoir

Want to write but don't know where to start? Know where to start but unsure of how to progress? This workshop will help you generate ideas and will illustrate some simple ways to give your writing a structure. You could be thinking of a memoir, a novel, a story, even a film. You could be just looking for ways to express yourself through writing. We all have stories to tell and memories to share. Why not explore some ways to write them down. The workshop will be delivered in an accessible and friendly way and is open to writers of any level.

Anthony Cropper is previous winner of the BBC Alfred Bradley Award for Radio Drama, has published two novels, a collection of short stories. *The Accidental Memoir* (co-written with Eve Makis) was published by HarperCollins in 2018.

SLOT THREE

Writing Time

Writing narratives set in another time other than the present can be at challenging, rewarding and imaginative. Historical fiction can enable a reader through the perspective of characters in the story to feel that they are present at the events and can give a deeper understanding to different cultures or historical moments. But how do you balance factual representation with the narrative requirements needed to maintain the pace of a story? And how do you write about the past authentically, especially if you have no links to the story in question? Join our panel of professional writers to explore these questions and more.

Chair: Judith Alnatt

Panel: Rebecca Mascull; Kerry Young.

Judith Allnatt's fiction has been shortlisted for the Portico Prize and the EMBA, broadcast on Radio 4 and featured as Book of the Month on Radio5 Live. Her latest novel is **The Silk Factory**. www.judithalnatt.com

Rebecca Mascull is an historical novelist and writes saga novels as Mollie Walton. She is a Fellow of the Royal Literary Fund at University of Lincoln. She has a Masters in Writing and lives locally.

Kerry Young is the author of three novels: *'Pao'*, *'Gloria'* and *'Show Me A Mountain'*. She is a Reader for The Literary Consultancy, an Arvon Foundation tutor and Project Fellow at the Royal Literary Fund.

Making Money from Your Writing

In today's competitive writing market, it is more vital than ever that writers create their own opportunities, innovate and explore different ways of making money from the craft of writing. In a literary world where professional writers are finding it harder to earn a living from their books alone, what are the other approaches that a writer can take to making money from their talent and their craft? And how do you grow your readership and reach new audiences? Join our panel of experienced writers who have tackled such questions and carved their own path through the literary landscape.

Chair: Stephen Booth

Panel: Andrew Graves; Shreya Sen-Handley.

Stephen Booth is a former newspaper journalist and author of 18 novels in the best-selling Cooper and Fry crime series, with multiple award nominations on both sides of the Atlantic and translations into 16 languages.

Andrew Graves is a writer, poet and educator. Author of *God save the Teen*, *Light at the End of the Tenner* and *Welcome to the Cheap Seats: Silver Screen Portrayals of the British Working Class*

Shreya Sen-Handley is author of two books with HarperCollins, the award-winning 'Memoirs of My Body' and the recently published 'Strange: Stories', is also a Welsh National Opera librettist, international media columnist, creative writing teacher, and illustrator.

Ready, Steady, Pitch: Preparing Your Manuscript for Publication

Preparation can be the difference between a book 'making it', and not. Aki Schilz discusses the importance of editing in this process, going through some simple tips and tricks, as well as taking you through how best to perfect your book pitch. Learn how to talk about your book in a clear way, and about how best – if and when you are ready – to approach agents and publishers.

Aki Schilz is the Director of The Literary Consultancy. In 2018 Aki was named as one of the top 40 innovators in publishing, and in 2019 she was shortlisted for the Women in Publishing Award.

Using Psychology to Create Compelling Characters

The most compelling fictional characters are believable and memorable. In this session, Kira-Anne reveals how writers can use psychological tools to create more engaging characters, why the Big Five personality dimensions are a great basis for creating complex characters, and why the very best characters stay in our minds long after we've closed the pages of the text. For this rapid workshop, grounded in evidence-based psychology, bring along ideas for your own character and be prepared to put them through their paces!

Kira-Anne Pelican is a writer, researcher and script consultant. She is the author of *The Science of Writing Characters: Using Psychology to Create Compelling Fictional Characters*, which will be published by Bloomsbury later this year.

SLOT FOUR

The Publishing Process

Join our panel of leading literary agents and editor and have your questions answered about the publishing process and what to expect. Is the process to publication different depending on what genre or discipline you write? How do the large publishing houses differ to the smaller independent presses and what level of support can a writer hope to get from

both? Are agents necessary for every route to publication? And how important it is that you build your audience before receiving a publication deal? This is your opportunity to have any questions you may have from the day answered by industry experts.

Chair: Theo Jones

Panel: Kate Barker, Oli Munson; Stuart Bartholomew.

Theo Jones is contracts advisor at The Society of Authors and Co-Secretary of the Scriptwriters Group. He was previously a rights manager at Oxford University Press.

Kate Barker has worked in book publishing for over 20 years as an agent, editor and ghostwriter. She represents a broad range of authors of fiction and non-fiction and is actively building her list.

Stuart Bartholomew is Co-founder of Birmingham based Verve Poetry Press, which is dedicated to promoting and showcasing Midlands poetic talent in colourful and exciting ways.

Oli Munson is a director at A.M Heath and Co, London's oldest independent literary agency. He represents award winning writers of commercial fiction and non-fiction. His client list includes award-winning, bestselling authors of crime, suspense, thrillers and speculative fiction and non-fiction.

Cartography For Writers: how to navigate the landscapes we create

From when we first start writing stories as children to when we offer our work to some sort of an audience, every writer is developing their own inner world. As we enhance that world, we are setting out on a journey. But how can we know what is the lay of this terrain, and is it our life's work as writers to simply express as much of it as possible? Join five very varied writers, all currently teaching Creative Writing at the University of Lincoln College, as they discuss their different approaches to narrative and world building.

Chair: TBC

Panel: Dr Sue Healy; Daniele Pantano; Sarah Stovell; Dr Guy Mankowski; Dr Chris Dows.

Dr Sue Healy is an award-winning writer and playwright. She has had three full-length plays staged in London, nine radio dramas broadcast and has won a number of national awards for her short-stories. In addition to lectureship at the University of Lincoln, she is also Literary Manager at the Finborough Theatre, London, and was recently elected a 2019 Hawthornden Castle Fellow.

Daniele Pantano is a poet and literary translator. He has published over twenty volumes of poetry, essays, and literary translations, and his poems have been translated into a dozen languages. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing and Programme Leader for the MA Creative Writing at the University of Lincoln. For more information, please visit www.pantano.ch.

Sarah Stovell is a novelist. She started out writing historical fiction, but soon realised there was more money in writing crime. She has published two crime novels, *Exquisite* and *The Home*. *The Home* was recently in the top 50 Best Recommended Reads for 2020 by the ipaper.

Dr Guy Mankowski is the author of four internationally published novels. His second, *Letters from Yelena* (Legend Press, 2012) was researched in the world of Russian ballet. An extract of it was used in GCSE training material by Osiris Educational. His fourth novel, *An Honest Deceit* (Urbane, 2018) won an Arts Council Literature Prize and was a New Writing North Read Regional title. He lectures full time in Creative Writing at the University of Lincoln.

Dr Chris Dows has been professionally published for twenty five years in formats as diverse as graphic novel, non-fiction, short and long form prose. Currently specialising in audio dramas for the Games Workshop Warhammer 40K franchise, he has written across several genres, specialising in science fiction and fantasy licensed products that include Star Trek, Rugrats and The Jackie Chan Adventures.

Space to Shine: Arts Council England Funding Opportunities

In this session Literature Relationship Manager Peter Stones will give a detailed insight into the funding opportunities for writers with Arts Council England, covering both Developing Your Creative Practice and National Lottery Project Grants. Information will include how to apply, best practice in responding to the application forms, and case studies. The session is appropriate for prior and first-time applicants looking to apply for projects or development opportunities.

Peter Stones has worked for Arts Council England for 7 years supporting a broad range of artists and organisations to access funds and development opportunities. His current responsibilities include literary development for the Midlands.