

A World of Words: Workshops for Writers

Start date 31 March 2019

End date 31 March 2019

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge

Tutor Dr Sarah Burton
Professor Jem Poster

Course code 1819NDX056

Director of Academic Centres Dr Corinne Boz

For further information on this course, please contact Head of Academic Centre Administration
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To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746 262

Tutor biography

Sarah Burton's publications are diverse, including two critically acclaimed biographies, *Impostors: Six Kinds of Liar* (2000; translated into Korean, Japanese, Czech and Spanish) and *A Double Life: a Biography of Charles and Mary Lamb* (2003; shortlisted for the Mind Book of the Year award); a children's book, *The Miracle in Bethlehem: A Storyteller's Tale* (2008), a page-to-stage guide, *How to Put on a Community Play* (2011) and a spoof, *The Complete and Utter History of the World By Samuel Stewart, Aged 9* (2013). She was Writer in Residence for the Hosking Houses Trust in 2009 and the historical novel which she began there, *H*, was shortlisted for the Lucy Cavendish Fiction Prize 2013. Sarah has also written and produced seven community plays. She has taught at the Universities of London and Oxford and was Course Director of the Master's programme in Creative Writing 2013-2017 at ICE where she continues to teach across a range of programmes in Creative Writing and facilitates the programme of Creative Writing Retreats.

Jem Poster worked as an archaeologist, surveying and excavating a range of sites on behalf of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, before taking up an administrative post with Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education in 1987. From 1993 to 2003 he was University Lecturer in Literature with Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education and a fellow of Kellogg College. From 2003 to 2012 he was Professor of Creative Writing at Aberystwyth University, and is now Emeritus Professor. He is the author of two novels, *Courting Shadows* (2002) and *Rifling Paradise* (2006), as well as a collection of poetry, *Brought to Light* (2001), and is editor of volume 3 of the six-volume Oxford University Press *Edward Thomas: Prose Writings* (2018). He has won prizes in major poetry competitions including first prize in both the Cardiff International Poetry Competition in 1995 and the Peterloo Poets Open Poetry Competition in 2001. He has been Chair of the editorial board of Wales's leading literary journal, *New Welsh Review* and Programme Advisor to Cambridge University's MSt in Creative Writing; he is currently an Affiliated Lecturer of Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education, and Director of its Summer Programme in Creative Writing. He is Director of Academic Programmes for the Financial Times Oxford Literary Festival and in 2014 spent four months as Writer in Residence at Arizona State University.

Course programme

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	Group A: What is poetry? Group B: What is prose?
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	Group A: Between the lines Group B: Micro fictions
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	Group A: What is prose? Group B: What is poetry?
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	Group A: Micro fictions Group B: Between the lines
16:45	Day-school ends

Course syllabus

If you are seeking to regenerate, refresh and develop your writing skills, this new day school offers classes in prose and poetry with two specialist tutors, giving you the opportunity both to build on familiar ground and to discover and explore new territories.

Aims:

To develop students' existing skills in a familiar genre and to encourage students to engage and experiment with an unfamiliar genre, enhancing their abilities and confidence as writers generally.

Content:

The great writer Italo Calvino believed that 'every field of writing cannot be indifferent to other fields' – this course is based on that idea: that every genre of writing can feed into and enrich other genres. Though you may not be a poet, experimenting with the form will help you think about precise and concise language and the 'music' of words – all assets in prose writing. Conversely, if you usually write poetry, you will be encouraged to experiment with short-form fiction, and consider the possibilities for expression prose offers.

This day school is designed to refresh writers' existing skills and explore and develop new ones by seeing poetry and prose as inhabiting the same spectrum rather than as necessarily sharply defined and mutually exclusive forms. A supportive and informal but focused approach is designed to embrace the needs of students of all abilities, providing stimulation for absolute beginners and experienced writers alike. Students will benefit from small group tuition for most of the day (two classes in each genre) as well as forming part of a larger community of writers at the opening and close of the day. By the end of the course we aim for students to feel ready to re-engage with their own writing refreshed, reinvigorated and equipped with new skills and new ideas.

Presentation of the course:

Sarah and Jem are both practising writers and experienced tutors whose believe in getting the best out of their students by nurturing their own voices rather than imposing a style on them. Their classes typically include the sharing of stimulus material and structured discussion arising from it before moving on to exercises which enable the student to experiment with the strategies they have identified. Discussion and positive criticism is encouraged. Teaching methods are low-tech and all you will need in class are writing materials.

Outcomes:

By the end of the course students may be expected to have developed an understanding of and enhanced expertise in writing fiction and poetry.

Reading and resources list

There are no set texts for the course, however in advance of the course students may be emailed some materials to read in preparation.

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

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