



Institute of Continuing Education

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## Creative writing: historical fiction

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**Start date** 11<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Time** 10:00 – 16:45

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge

**Tutor** Ms Natasha Pulley

**Course code** 2021NDX236

**Director of Academic Centres** Dr Corinne Boz

**For further information on this course, please contact**

The Creative Writing Team  
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**To book** see: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

### Tutor biography

Natasha Pulley graduated from the University of Oxford with a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature, and then from the University of East Anglia with a master's degree in Creative Writing. Her first novel, *The Watchmaker of Filigree Street* (Bloomsbury) was an international bestseller. She works as an associate lecturer at Bath Spa University, and a panel tutor at ICE.

## Course programme

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09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
<b>10:00 – 11:15</b>	<b>Finding history</b>
11:15	Coffee
<b>11:45 – 13:00</b>	<b>Historical language</b>
13:00	Lunch
<b>14:00 – 15:15</b>	<b>Historical characters</b>
15:15	Tea
<b>15:30 – 16:45</b>	<b>Different approaches to history</b>
16:45	Day-school ends

## **Course syllabus**

### **Aims:**

- to introduce students to historical fiction, where it comes from, and some key texts
- to provide students with basic tools to write historical fiction independently

### **Content:**

Session 1 — This session will explore just what historical fiction is, how it developed, and how to start tracking down ideas for stories from real sources.

Session 2 — Historical fiction has one of the biggest range of prose styles of any genre. This session will be about exploring the strengths and weaknesses of modern diction, historical diction, and blends of both. Students will also have a chance to experiment with different styles, based on real historical sources.

Session 3 — Choosing the right narrator affects everything. This session will give students the chance to experiment with different voices, even while they keep the same list of historical facts, and to explore how perspective can change everything.

Session 4 — Historical fiction overlaps with lots of other genres, from crime to fantasy. In this session, we will explore how different approaches affect the story and the research, and how to experiment with different elements to construct unique ideas.

### **Presentation of the course:**

Class discussion, with lectures and some writing exercises.

### **As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

- understand some of the origins of historical fiction, and recognise some of the important texts of the genre
- produce some early ideas that could lead to longer stories
- understand some different styles and techniques which they might later develop in their own writing

## Reading and resources list

There is no essential reading. Extracts of relevant work will be provided on the day.

Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course.

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Author	Title	Publisher and date
Collins, Sara	<i>The Confessions of Frannie Langton</i>	Viking, 2019
Miller, Madeline	<i>The Song of Achilles</i>	Bloomsbury 2017
	<i>Circe</i>	Bloomsbury, 2019
Harris, Robert	<i>Imperium</i>	Arrow, 2009
	<i>Fatherland</i>	Arrow, 2009
Sansom, CJ	<i>Dissolution</i>	Pan, 2015
Mantel, Hilary	<i>Wolf Hall</i>	Fourth Estate, 2010
Purcell, Laura	<i>The Silent Companions</i>	Bloomsbury, 2018
Paver, Michelle	<i>Dark Matter</i>	Orion, 2010
	<i>Thin Air</i>	Orion, 2016
Simmons, Dan	<i>The Terror</i>	Transworld, 2010
Scott, Walter	<i>Waverley</i>	Penguin Classics, 2011
Clarke, Susanna	<i>Jonathan Strange &amp; Mr Norrell</i>	Bloomsbury, 2009
Hearn, Lian	<i>Across the Nightingale Floor</i>	Picador, 2008
Kingsnorth, Paul	<i>The Wake</i>	Unbound, 2015
Pulley, Natasha	<i>The Bedlam Stacks</i>	Bloomsbury, 2017
Tower, Wells	<i>Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned</i>	Granta, 2010

## **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](mailto:ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk) or +44 (0)1223 746262.

**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.

*Information correct as of:* 11/22/19