

Programme of Activities May - August 2015

SUPPORTING
CREATIVE WRITERS AND CREATIVE WRITING
IN THE WEST MIDEANDS

WWW.WRITINGWESTMIDLANDS.ORG

NEWS FROM US

Welcome to the summer season of Writing West Midlands' events and activities

We are the region's literature development agency, a registered charity and one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations. We work with writers from the age of 8 upwards to encourage and develop creative writing and creative writing activity across the West Midlands.

In this brochure you'll find information about our key projects and events. There's plenty more, plus contact details, at www.writingwestmidlands.org.



WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

We support creative writers and creative writing in the West Midlands region through;

Developing Writers

We work with aspiring, emerging & established writers providing workshops, courses, toolkit events, residencies and networking or creative development programmes like Room 204.

Young Writers

We provide opportunities for young people to develop and road-test their work through our Young Writers' Groups, online magazine and work in schools.

Festivals and Fvents

As well as producing the annual Birmingham Literature Festival, we also produce and partner on a rich calendar of other events across the region.

Regional Activity

We partner with publishers, universities, arts and non-arts organisations to help create opportunities for writers and a culture that supports creative writers in our region and beyond.

THE WRITING WEST MIDLANDS TEAM

Jonathan Davidson Chief Executive

Emma Boniwell Relationship Manager

Olivia Chapman PR & Comms Manager Projects Manager

Joanne Penn

Sara Beadle **Programmes Director**

Abigail Campbell **Festival Programmer**

Connor Evans **Team Administrator** Chris Swann **Events Manager**



April feels like the beginning of term here at Writing West Midlands HQ. We've just announced the brand new cohort of writers selected for this year's Room 204 writer development scheme, and you can find details on our website.

We are also excited to be planning our first ever Young Writers' Networking Session in June, where young people aged 8 -18 can get valuable advice and guidance on carving a path towards a writing career. Our regular monthly Young Writers' Groups pause from June to September, but fear not - the Young Writers' Summer School, a one week course for 12-19 year olds at the University of Warwick, will run in August, giving the region's young writers a burst of activity and an opportunity to attain Bronze Arts Award.

Our events calendar is brimming with goodness, too. Two more Short & Sweet Short Fiction Salons in May and June at the Library of Birmingham offer writers the opportunity to test out pieces of fiction in front of a live audience. and a poetry launch aboard a narrowboat could be the perfect way to spend a hazy May evening. Make sure vou're back on dry land

by late June, however, so you don't miss our unique Literature & Psychiatry discussion with writers Femi Oyebode and Robert Edric as part of the Royal College of Psychiatry's Annual Conference.

This summer's short course is on Editing Fiction with Alan Mahar, and runs from early May - late June; we expect this to book up quickly, so don't miss out. If time won't allow you to take on a six week course, perhaps you'll want to come along to one of our two Writer Networking Sessions - in Tamworth in May and Worcester in July. These are a staple of our programme every season - free, informal and informative, and a great way to get out and meet other writers.

As well as making sure you enjoy this season's activities, we will also be busy putting the finishing touches to the programme for the Birmingham Literature Festival (8-17 October), ready to announce it in mid-July. Look out for it!

Sara Beadle **Programmes Director** MAY

MAY

KITH: LAUNCH ON THE WATER

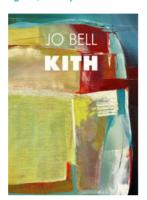
Friday 8 May, 6 - 7.30pm

Aboard the narrowboat Frederick (meeting at the Tap & Spile, Gas St Basin, Birmingham, B1 2JT)

Join us in launching *Kith*, the latest collection from poet Jo Bell. Published by West Midlands-based Nine Arches Press, this latest offering will be shared in style - on the Birmingham canals, with guest readings from fellow Nine Arches poet, Elisabeth Charis. Jo Bell is the UK's Canal Laureate. A poet and an advocate for poetry, her new collection *Kith* is a wry and mindful take on the relationships that make life rich - from fiery couplings and passing affairs, to laughter-filled friendships with fellow travellers. Human behaviour is at the centre of these poems but canal landscapes also feature, as you might expect from a boat dweller.

'Jo Bell is one of the most exciting poets now writing and no time is wasted in the company of her work.'- Carol Ann Duffy

We regret that there is no wheelchair access on the boat. Seating is limited so please book early to avoid disappointment!





FULL PRICE £12 FRIENDS PRICE £10.80 BOOK: 0121 245 4455 / www. writingwestmidlands.org

SHORT AND SWEET: SHORT FICTION SALON

Tuesday 12 May, 5.45 - 7pm

Book Box, Library of Birmingham, Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2ND

Due to the success of the first four events, we are continuing our monthly evening of short fiction performances, discussion and networking. Short & Sweet has so far featured powerful snippets of humour, humility and adventure. Expect prose fiction, imaginatively presented in bite-size seven-minute portions. Hosted by writer and *Heart* Breakfast presenter Rachel New.

There are four short fiction open mic slots available: please see www.writingwestmidlands.org to book one. Attendance at the event is free, but please book to avoid disappointment.





SHORT COURSE: EDITING YOUR FICTION WITH ALAN MAHAR

Tuesdays 12 May - 23 June (excluding 26 May), 6 - 8pm
Writing West Midlands, Unit 204, The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Birmingham, B9 4AA

Former publisher of literary fiction Alan Mahar offers a professional perspective on preparing your fiction for publication. Six sessions, beginning with an introduction to editing and the editing cycle: commissioning fiction, structural editing, copy editing and proofreading.

Special attention will be given to commonly-encountered editorial problems and issues arising from participants' own texts. You will be encouraged to try your hand at some editing of your own, as well as honing your self-editing skills.

Please note that this is not a manuscript reading service, although you will be given the opportunity to gain feedback on a small amount of your own work during the course.



Image © Lee Alle

£110 FOR ALL SIX SESSIONS BOOK: www.writingwestmidlands.org

WRITER NETWORKING SESSION: TAMWORTH

Thursday 21 May, 2 - 4pm
Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Corporation Street, Tamworth, B79 7DN

Join Writing West Midlands staff and guest speakers for an hour of presentations and discussion about making your way in the writing industry, followed by informal networking.

Our Writer Networking events are a chance to ask questions about creative writing opportunities, including funding and residencies. Full details of speakers can be found on our website.

www.writingwestmidlands.org





JUNE

JUNE / JULY

SHORT AND SWEET: SHORT FICTION SALON

Tuesday 9 June, 5.45 - 7pm

Book Box, Library of Birmingham, Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2ND

Our monthly evening of short fiction performances, discussion and networking, in partnership with the Library of Birmingham. Short & Sweet features powerful snippets of humour, humility and adventure from members of the audience. Expect prose fiction. imaginatively presented in bite-size seven-minute portions, hosted by writer and *Heart* Breakfast presenter Rachel New.

There are four short fiction open mic slots available: please see www.writingwestmidlands.org to book one. Attendance at the event is free, but please book to avoid disappointment.

Theme: The Sea REWRITING THE BOOK
THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM



FREE BOOK: 0121 245 4455 / www. writingwestmidlands.org

YOUNG WRITERS' NETWORKING SESSION

Saturday 13 June, 1 - 3pm

Heritage Learning Space, Library of Birmingham, Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2ND

Aimed at young people between the ages of 8 and 18 who are interested in creative writing of any sort.

Join professional writers and those who work in the writing industry for an informative advice session to help you move on with your writing. From guidance about getting into writing, what to expect from a life as a writer and which higher education options to consider, this session will also allow time for as many questions as you can muster.

Parents welcome too!



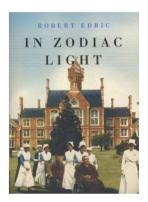
FREE BOOK: www.writingwestmidlands.org

LITERATURE AND PSYCHIATRY

Monday 29 June. 6.10 - 7.30pm Library of Birmingham, Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2ND

Drawing attention to the way that writers mine their own inner feelings of despair and sometimes of clinical depression as material for their novels, this event will focus on the complex interrelationships between literature (fiction & memoirs) and psychiatry.

Featuring Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyebode, Robert Edric and Jo McFarlane. This session will provide the opportunity for these matters to be discussed, explored, explained and subjected to analysis.



FULL PRICE £10 / £8 (concs) FRIENDS PRICE £9 / £7.20 (concs) BOOK: 0121 245 4455 / www.writingwestmidlands.org

WRITER NETWORKING SESSION: WORCESTER

Saturday 11 July, 10.30am - 12.30pm The Hive, Sawmill Walk, The Butts, Worcester, WR1 3PD

Join Writing West Midlands staff and guest speakers for an hour of presentations and discussion about making your way in the writing industry, followed by informal networking.

Our Writer Networking events are a chance to ask questions about creative writing opportunities, including funding and residencies. Full details of speakers can be found on our website.

www.writingwestmidlands.org

FREE





BOOK: www.writingwestmidlands.org

The full programme for this year's Birmingham Literature Festival will be available online on Thursday 16 July at www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org. Sign up to the newsletter to be the first to know who's appearing!

AUGUST

JOIN US



YOUNG WRITERS' SUMMER SCHOOL

Monday 3 - Friday 7 August, 11am - 4pm*
The Writers' Room, Millburn House, Millburn Hill Road, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7HS

Following on from the success of our first Summer School in 2014, Writing West Midlands, in partnership with The Writing Centre (part of the Warwick Writing Programme at the University of Warwick,) presents a non-residential summer school for those aged 12 - 19.

The Summer School is a fantastic opportunity for young people to develop their skills and interests in creative writing. There will be two age groups, one for those aged 12 - 15 and one for those aged 16 - 19, each meeting daily from Monday 3 till Friday 7 August.

Suitable for anyone who loves writing in any form, the week is also particularly suitable for young writers considering studying Creative Writing at university or taking the new A-level in Creative Writing. Across the week, young writers will explore many forms of writing, from poetry and short stories to writing for the stage and screen, led by professional writers Nick Walker and Liz Berry, with guest writers visiting to share their experience of the literature industry and their career paths. At the end of the week parents, family and friends will be invited to a showcase of work.

Young writers involved will also have the chance to complete a Bronze Arts Award, a nationally-recognised qualification that builds creative and leadership skills in the arts.

*Young people taking part in Arts Awards may be asked to stay an extra hour each day. Please note that lunch isn't included.







BECOME A FRIEND AND SUPPORT CREATIVE WRITING AND WRITERS IN THE WEST MIDI ANDS

Join us by becoming a Friend and help us to develop writers of all ages across the region. You will also get special discounts at our events and workshops, including our annual Writers' Toolkit.

For as little as £3 a month (or a one-off yearly payment of £30), you can make a real contribution to creative writing and literature activities in the West Midlands.

BENEFITS OF BECOMING A FRIEND INCLUDE:

10% off tickets for events Special prices for workshops and Toolkit 20% off books at our events Exclusive quarterly newsletter 25% off Nine Arches Press books 10% discount off total bill at Café Opus at Ikon
25% off a la carte menu at Loch Fyne
(selected branches only)
2 for 1 offer on tickets to the RSC viewing tower

More details: www.writingwestmidlands.org/support-us



Sign up to become a Friend, Supporter or Benefactor in person (at our events), online using debit or credit card, PayPal or Direct Debit, or complete the form overleaf and send us a cheque made payable to Writing West Midlands to:

Emma Boniwell, Relationship Manager, Writing West Midlands. Unit 204, The Custard Factory, Gibb Street, Birmingham, B9 4AA.

Thank you for your support!

JOIN US

Sign up to become a Friend by completing the form below. You can also join online at www.writingwestmidlands.org/support-us. Please enter your details in block capitals.

Title	First name
Last Name	
Mobile	
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EVEL OF SU	
	Debit option (£3 per month).
an you give	more?
	give a larger donation, you will help us to bring even more writing to gion. Become a Supporter (£80) Benefactor (£150+)
C	Or just donate at www.writingwestmidlands.org/donate
to	order to claim your discounted tickets, we have to pass your details our box office, The Box. Please tick if you do not wish us to do this.
	e Box may use your details to give you information about events at the Library Birmingham. Please tick if you do not wish to hear about these events.

The Box may pass your details on to carefully selected third parties.

Please tick here if you do not want to hear from them



3-17 OCTOBER 2015

Full programme announced online on Thursday 16 July 2015

www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org





It costs over £21,000 to run our network of Young Writers' Groups across the region. We have already raised £18,000 to support these groups. We need to raise a further £3,000 to make these groups happen. With your help we can keep costs low for our young writers! Just £50 could pay for one child to develop as a writer for one year, but every little bit helps.

Donate now by texting WWMS15 £5 or £10 to 70070 or by visiting www.writingwestmidlands.org/donate and clicking on the "Donate now" button.



Calendar May - August 2015

MAY			
Friday 8	Kith: Launch on the Water	Birmingham	£12
Tuesday 12	Short and Sweet: Short Fiction Salon	Birmingham	Free
Tuesday 12 - Tuesday 23 June	Short Course: Editing Your Fiction with Alan Mahar	Birmingham	£110 for six sessions
Thursday 21	Writer Networking Session: Tamworth	Tamworth	Free
JUNE			
Tuesday 9	Short and Sweet: Short Fiction Salon	Birmingham	Free
Saturday 13	Young Writers' Networking Session	Birmingham	Free
Monday 29	Literature and Psychiatry	Birmingham	£10 / £8
JULY			
Saturday 11	Writer Networking Session: Worcester	Worcester	Free
AUGUST			
Monday 3 - Friday 7	Young Writers' Summer School	Coventry	£75 for the week
COMING SOON			
Thursday 8 - Saturday 17 October	Birmingham Literature Festival	Birmingham	Various

Thanks to all Friends, Supporters & Benefactors of Writing West Midlands.

If you would like more information about our Friends scheme, please visit the Support Us page on our website. www.writingwestmidlands.org





Tweet us @writingwestmids or find us on Facebook and Vimeo



Writing West Midlands, Unit 204, The Custard Factory, Gibb St, Birmingham, B9 4AA. Tel: 0121 246 2770 www.writingwestmidlands.org

Company Registration Number: 6264124. Registered Charity Number: 1147710. The advertised programme is subject to change without notice where unavoidable.