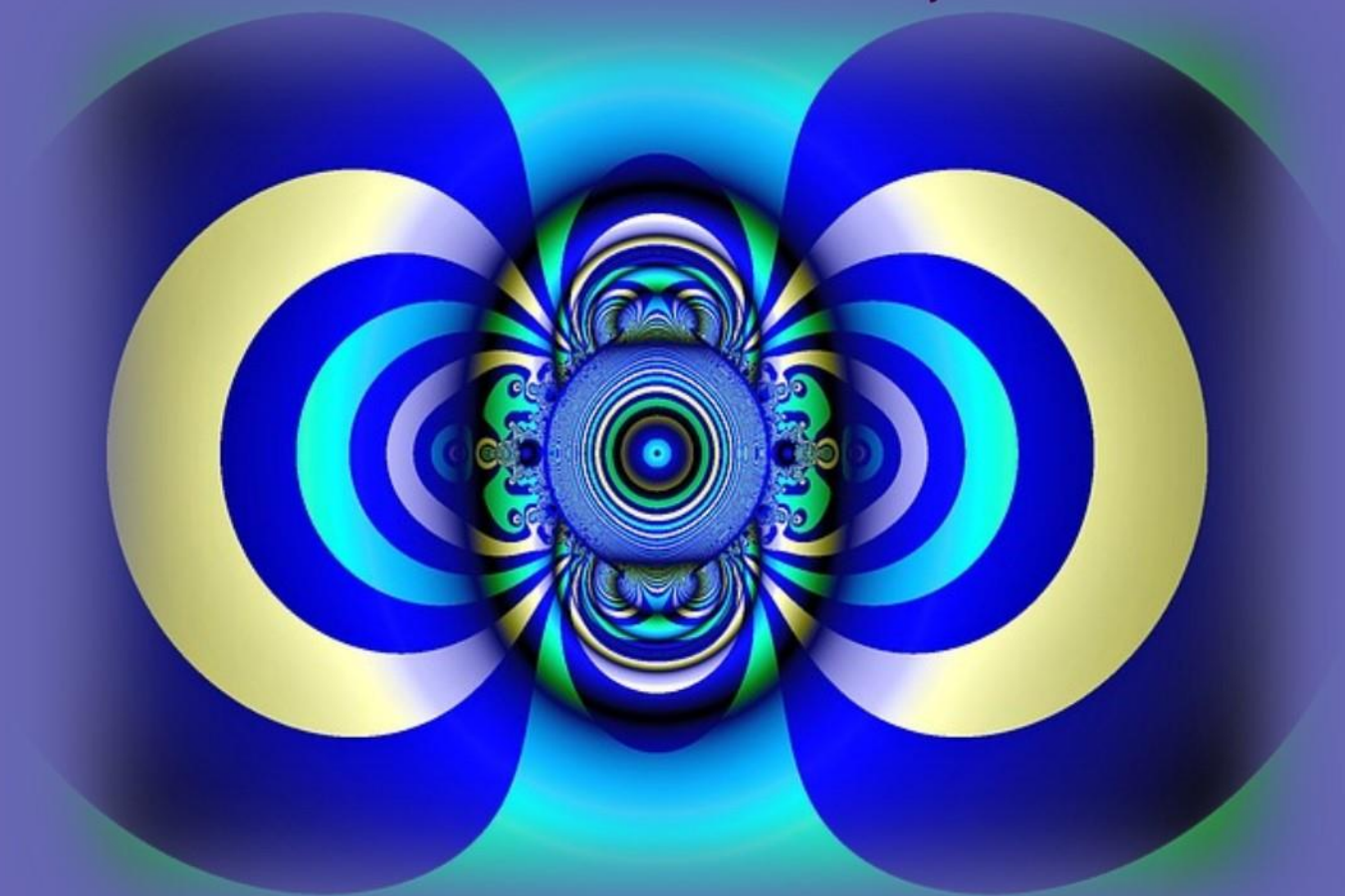


WRITERS ABROAD MAGAZINE

The Third Space

Issue 5 : November 2016



The secret of health for both mind and body is not
to mourn for the past, worry about the future or
anticipate troubles, but to live in the present
moment wisely and earnestly – Buddah

EDITORIAL

Writers Abroad proudly presents the fifth issue of the WA magazine, The Third Space. We hope that within these pages each and every one of our readers will find a story, flash fiction, poem or article, to whet the appetite. Also, get to know a little about some of our members through the Member Spotlight and From Here To There.

Our writers have achieved successes over the months since the last magazine in a variety of ways - publication in magazines and anthologies, long and short listing in a number of competitions, and even the coveted first prize position.

Writing for our audience brings us great pleasure and pushes us to continually hone our creative skill. To present work of high quality, in content and presentation, has always been our aim and you, our readers, keep that aspiration alive.

The diversity of our members, life style, where they call home, and a multitude of experiences, come together in this magazine to provide a collection of work we look forward to sharing with you.

Your reading experiences are what assist us in developing our art and to that end we ask you to complete the short survey at the conclusion of the magazine. Subsequently, as a thank you, you will be entered into a draw to win an e-copy of one of our anthologies. Happy reading, one and all.

WRITTEN BY **CHRISTINE NEDAH**

Dragon Boat racing in Aberdeen. This is done as part of the Tueng Ng Festival, which is celebrated on the 5th day of the 5th Lunar month and dates back to the third century. Teams of paddlers race in time to the beat of the drum. © Laura Besley



In this Issue:

Something for everyone we hope...

Regular Features:

[How to...describe your story by Alyson Hilbourne](#)

[From Here featuring Vanessa Couchman...](#)

[To There featuring Nicola Cleasby](#)

[Author Interview featuring Rachel Marsh](#)

[Book Reviews by Hamish Macdonald, Jill Brown and Alyson Hilbourne](#)

[Recipes from Crilly O'Neil and Sue Borgersen](#)

[Photos – provided by Sue Borgersen and Laura Besley](#)

[WA Spotlight featuring Jo Lamb \(Louise Charles\)](#)

Articles:

[Enrich Story Telling by Dianne Ascroft](#)

[Writer in Wonderland by Lesley Truchet](#)

[There's No Place Like Home by Laura Besley](#)

[How to Swear like a Dutchie by Angela Williams](#)

Fiction:

[Free at Last by Crilly O'Neil](#)

[The Japanese Musician by Sue Borgersen](#)

[Making Good by Vanessa Couchman](#)

[Wolf at the Door by Susan Carey](#)

Poetry:

[A Morning Like Any by Bieke Stengos](#)

[Sister of No Mercy by S.B.Borgersen](#)

[The Typo Prankster by Lesley Truchet](#)

[Farewell for Now by Lesley Truchet](#)



WOLF AT THE DOOR

BY SUSAN CAREY

‘Oh, Mum. Do I really have to go and visit Granny?’ Charlotte was bent over her phone, as if in prayer. ‘Luce just asked me to go down to Starbys and have coffee with her and Arizona.’

‘It’s your turn to visit your grandmother. Your sister went last week.’

‘But Granny is so old and boring and forgetful.’

‘You’ll be old and boring and forgetful one day and glad of someone coming to visit you and keep you company.’

‘Whatevs.’ Charlotte said as she got up from the L-shaped couch. ‘Can I wear my new Converse trainers?’

‘No, put your Wellies on; it’s pouring outside. And wear your red poncho with the hood.’

‘Duh, no, I wouldn’t be seen dead in that thing!’

Charlotte’s mum was already pulling the red plastic poncho out of its tiny fold-up square. She put it over her daughter’s head who stood with her back bowed, like a horse in the rain.

‘Don’t sulk. Stand up straight. And here’s the basket with Granny’s eggs, butter, bread, milk and ham. That’ll keep her going till the weekend.’

'Why doesn't she use Okado and get it all delivered?'

'Because Okado don't drive three-quarters of a mile into a forest along a dirt track.'

'Haven't you heard how dangerous it is to send minors out on their own? There are paedophiles lurking around every corner you know. I read it on the Daily Mule website.'

'I told you not to read that anymore!' Charlotte's mum rustled her daughter into the red poncho and pulled the hood up. 'Give my love to Gran, and stay on the path!'

Good job I'm not on a stealth mission, Charlotte thought, as she walked through the wood. You can hear me coming a mile off in this thing. She walked quickly, head down. The weight of the groceries in the crook of her arm cut off the blood flow so she shifted the basket to her other elbow. The rain was easing and Charlotte counted her steps to stave off boredom. She had got to three thousand nine hundred and forty two and was just past the big tree on the edge of Granny's garden when the sound of an escaped lion assaulted her ears. She spun around. A sawn-off branch fell to the ground. A bearded man up a ladder held a chainsaw in his right hand.

Horror film images clamoured inside her head. She wasn't old enough to watch Slasher XV but she had watched the gory bits on Youtube with Luce. It had scared the poop out of them.

'Who are you and what are you doing up Granny's tree?' Charlotte asked in a trembling voice which was supposed to sound proprietorial.

'I'm the tree surgeon. Is your granny the old lady in the cottage, Mrs Lockhart?'

'Yes, that's her.'

'She called me out to cut down this branch. It's blocking the view from her conservatory or something.'

'Granny doesn't have a conservatory.'

'You and I know that, but she doesn't.' The tree surgeon raised his eyebrows. 'Frankly, I think Mrs Lockhart, lovely lady that she is, is a little bit...' he made circular movements with his index finger near his temple.

Charlotte was wrong-footed. It was one thing for her to moan about Granny being old and boring and forgetful and edging towards doolally, but it was quite another thing for someone else to be saying it.

As Charlotte was thinking of a snappy reply, a frail voice called from the front door of the thatched cottage. 'Charlotte, is that you?'

'Yes,' she called back. 'I'm coming.' Charlotte ran towards the cottage.

'Come on in, you'll be soaked after that long walk.'

'I'm fine, Gran.' Charlotte said as she shook the poncho dry.

'Just made a nice bit of fruit cake. Would you like some?'

'Love some. I'll just put the groceries in the kitchen for you.' As she put the food away she saw a Post-it sticker on the fridge. Pay the tree surgeon 150 pounds cash.

Charlotte pulled it off the fridge and took it into the front room where Gran was slicing a huge slab of cake. 'No, no Gran, not so thick,' Charlotte said.

'You're not on one of those silly diets, are you?'

'No, but half of that is enough for me.'

'You don't eat enough to keep a rabbit alive.'

Charlotte sat down and took a nibble of the cake. 'Who's that man outside, Gran?'

'What man, lovey?'

'The man with the chainsaw.'

Granny looked out the window. 'Oh, him.' She shrugged her shoulders.

'What's this then?' Charlotte held up the Post-it note.

'What's what?'

Charlotte took a deep breath. 'This note reminding you to pay him 150 pounds.'

Granny walked over and took the Post-it sticker from her granddaughter's hand. Charlotte noticed that she had odd slippers on. Every Christmas she insisted on the same present; velveteen mules with a furry front edge. She had them in umpteen different colours. Today she was wearing pink and mauve.

Granny pulled her chin into her neck and opened her eyes wide. The grandfather clock ticked and a log on the fire popped. 'Ah, wait a minute, now I remember. Yes that nice young man. Of course, he wasn't wearing those overalls, although he did have a long beard, I remember that. He came and asked if any of these trees needed pruning.'

'He said you called him out. You know what Mum told you about cold callers. And now he's gone and vandalised your lovely tree!'

'Well, you might think that but actually, it was your grandfather's idea to plant that tree. It was also his idea to come and live here. He loved nature and animals and fed all the birds but I'd much rather be back in town. In our lovely house with the conservatory.' Gran stared into the middle distance. 'It gets very lonely out here sometimes. And that branch was blocking the light for my dahlias.' She unstuck the Post-it sticker from her fingertips, screwed it into a ball and threw it in the fire.

A vehement rat-a-tat-tat rattled the door.

Charlotte jumped up and looked out the window. 'Jesus, Gran. What'll we do now? He wants his money. I'll call Mum.' She took her phone from her pocket.

'No, no dear. Don't do that. I'll let the dog out; he'll see him off.'

Now she really has lost it, Charlotte thought. It was at least two years since her dog had died. Gran, suddenly purposeful, not shuffling at all, walked to the tallboy and switched on a dust-covered cassette recorder. She turned the volume up to full and the sound of a barking dog filled the cottage. Then Granny rattled out a short garden rake from the cubbyhole beneath the stairs and bending forward, scraped the metal tines against the wooden door as if a vicious dog was scratching to escape.

Charlotte peeped out from the front room window. The woodsman was backing away down the garden path, his face paling with every step. He ran towards his tools, packed them up and bundled everything into a white van parked at the end of Granny's lane. As his tail lights disappeared into the wood, Gran winked at her granddaughter. 'Got the job done for nothing, didn't I? Not so doolally after all.'

There's No Place Like Home

BY LAURA BESLEY

Every summer my husband and I go back to England to visit friends and relatives. We're both teachers and have therefore always been lucky with how much holiday we get. When I was still teaching full-time, we used to go back to England for three weeks (and were still able to go somewhere at Christmas or Easter – sometimes even both – to satisfy our wanderlust). Now I am mainly a full-time mum (I only teach on



Saturdays) and feel even stronger about going back to England every summer. Because it's possible, I go for longer (my husband always has to return early to go back to work); partly to escape the oppressive heat of a Hong Kong summer and partly because I want my son to spend as much time with his relatives as possible.

On one of the many sunny afternoons in England a friend of mine asked me whether we'd ever considered owning a car in Hong Kong.

'No, not really,' I replied. 'The congestion is a nightmare, as is the price of parking. And the public transport is so good. I suppose it would be nice for getting out a bit more at the weekend, to the beaches or the New Territories. If we lived there, I might.'

'Hang on a minute,' he said. 'Haven't you lived there for seven years?'

We both laughed, but it got me thinking about how I felt about living in Hong Kong. My husband and I had been living and working in Germany before Hong Kong. When our contracts ended there, we'd decided we wanted to live somewhere a little bit more exciting. I'd been to China once on holiday – and loved it – and my husband had thoroughly enjoyed a year in Japan previous to us meeting. We applied to Japan, South Korea, Oman and Hong Kong. We decided on the two-year contract at the British Council in Hong Kong.

That was in 2009 and we're still here. The main reason is professional development. My husband has done extensive training with the British Council and each time they have demanded, as repayment, that he stay another year. He has now moved to a university to gain some all-important experience in the tertiary system.

The fact that we're still here is nothing short of miraculous since I hated it when we first got here. I struggle to recall everything I hated about it, but I do remember being overwhelmed by copious amounts of identical – to me, at least – shiny skyscrapers which meant I was always getting lost; continuous hordes of people, the initial heat of the summer and then the bone-chilling damp of the winter (there is no indoor heating). And I remember thinking that I would see out the contract and then we would definitely be moving on.

In Hong Kong things are always changing. You can go back to your favourite shop to buy something you saw last week and it will be gone. Or the entire shop will be gone. Why has remained a complete mystery to me, but I've learned to buy things when I see them. There's always someone drilling somewhere, or something under renovation, which adds to the already high noise levels. I find this constant need to change things exhausting, and wish things could be left alone.

Connecting with people can be a double-edged sword. It's wonderful when people are here, but they leave a gaping hole in your life when they leave. A lot of my colleagues have only stayed for two years, so there have been many goodbyes. Luckily for me I've found friends through the writing community and most of them have stayed (and will no doubt be here long after I leave).

Travelling back at the end of summer did feel like I was coming home: my flat, my bed, my routines and my familiar surroundings. But I also felt like I was leaving another home behind.

Knowing I was never going to stay here has meant I have never settled here, and never will, and therefore can't completely think of this place as home. However, when I eventually do leave, it will always be very special to me.



*There are still many fishing villages and typhoon shelters in Hong Kong.
Unfortunately, fishing is dying out as it's hard to make a decent living from it.*

© LAURABESLEY

A morning like any

BY BIEKE STENGOS

The call to prayer
from a minaret, opposite
an open church door
breathing incense
into the street, still
as the night before
when not a breeze
had stirred the water.

There had been the sound
of drums for a while and a
woman's voice weaving
rose scented trebles
over velvet waves but
no echo of the traces
of violence now reflected
in the grimace
of a celluloid face, ripped
from a poster
and stranded on
a deserted slab
of pavement.

Some violence there
in the broken eyes.
Some desperation.



Author Interview: Rachel Marsh

BY LAURA BESLEY

When we met you were living in Hong Kong. Was this your first time living abroad?

It wasn't my first time living abroad – I'd lived in France for a year as part of my University degree course, teaching English when I was 20.



Do you feel that living abroad influenced your writing in any way?

Yes I think it did. I found that living abroad opened me up to new experiences, perspectives and feelings - I felt compelled to get them down on paper in case they escaped me. I think there is something valuable for writers in the experience of being a stranger. For me, that change in going from someone who arrived knowing no-one to someone who feels they have found a new home was a valuable journey where I learned a lot about myself.

How were you involved in the writing scene in Hong Kong?

It began with me deciding to do NaNoWriMo 2012, which put me in touch with a flourishing writing community. I went to a weekly write-up session, run by Shannon Brown, and within a few months some of us had decided to hold a monthly salon evening to share our writing. I found it was a supportive and inspiring environment for my writing. I also wanted to check out the poetry scene and get performing. I went along to OutLoud in the Fringe Club a few times before I worked up the courage to perform at it, and then I became a regular at Joyce is Not Here on Wednesday nights, until my time in Hong Kong was up. This group is now known as Peel Street Poets, who have a huge profile, performing at TedEx and drawing large crowds along to their weekly Open Mic at Orange Peel.

You have since moved back to the UK. How was the transition and how has it affected your writing?

I didn't find the transition easy. Although I had only been away for a year, it felt like a lot had changed. In particular I was aware that I had much less free time to write than I'd had in Hong Kong, because lots of friends and family wanted to see me. Of course this is lovely, but I haven't always been great at prioritising my own time – I'm getting better at this now though.

Tell us about 'Rhymes with Orange'.

Rhymes with Orange (www.orangesrhyme.com) started the month before I left to go to Hong Kong. It is a group of former colleagues who met once a week to write. With my

upcoming departure in the summer of 2012, we decided to dare ourselves to perform at a well-known Spoken Word night. We turned up to this night all raring to go but there were not any slots. We were crestfallen. Someone, after a few beers, said “Well there’s six of us, why don’t we do our own night?”. A month later we’d hired a (very hot) room above a pub in King’s Cross, invited all our friends and workmates, got up on stage and read our stuff. It was a great night, and our friends all told us we needed to do it again. I was dreadful. It was excruciating. But if I hadn’t taken that first step I’d never have carried on. It was the peer element for me - daring each other to do it, daring each other to continue. We did it again the following month, a week before I left for HK. I tried harder, I wanted to up my game, inspired by the other Rhymers. I was happy with the performance and left for Hong Kong on a high. It was the thought of Rhymes and ‘keeping my hand in’ to perform (the rest of them were going from strength to strength while I was away) that led me to Peel Street, which I am very glad about.

Congratulations on performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival two years running! How was it?

It was marvellous. One of the Edinburgh promoters, Underbelly, came to see us perform at Rhymes in February 2015 and on the basis of that offered us two shows at the 2015 fringe. We were very lucky to have been invited by a promoter, as we didn’t have to worry about sourcing a venue. We sold out and got 4* reviews and were invited to return for a longer run of one week this year, when we were joined by lots of guest performers who we were thrilled to share the stage with. It was great fun. The Edinburgh Fringe is wonderful. There’s such a huge range of things to see and do, everything seems to me to have an extra element of wonder to it. Nothing is ordinary. Beer gardens are fairy wonderlands; streets are performance trails. It’s like a huge creative playground.

What does the future hold for you as a writer?

I have begun two novels that I am going to finish and then I intend to seek representation and publication for them. I’m going to be published in a poetry anthology of London Spoken Word poets this autumn, and I’ll continue to do Rhymes with Orange and perform at our shows every other months at our residency in Shoreditch, London. I would at some point like to try playwriting but I’m aware of putting too much on my to-do list, so I’ll finish these novels first!

And, lastly, do you have any tips for budding poets or novelists?

Make time for your writing, even if it’s very early in the morning before you start work. If you can, find a writing group to join and share work with – peer support and inspiration is invaluable. Believe in yourself and be brave. It’s natural to feel nervous putting your work out in the world, but if you don’t, you’ll never know what might happen if you did. There could be such marvellous things out there awaiting you, just needing you to take those first steps towards them.

Free At Last

BY CRILLY O'NEIL

Camille stared as the butterfly batted his wings against the glass. *If only I could help him, he wants to escape.* She watched as he flew into the corner of the big window looking for a way out.

The lush green gardens of Orange Grove Retirement Village beckoned from the other side of the window pane.

A soft breeze swept the fragrance of the old wisteria into the room. Camille watched as some of the tiny purple flowers drifted from the veranda into the doorway.

'If my knees weren't so rickety, little butterfly, I would get up and open that door and let you out. Trouble is, those nurses park us here after lunch, forget to shut the blinds, the sun comes in, the room warms up and we oldies go to sleep. Then again, maybe that's the idea.' Camille looked at George who sat next to her and smiled.

George was known for voicing his opinion - not that much of it made any sense these days. His mind was scrambled. His hearing aids lay on top of a not-so-white handkerchief on the coffee table next to him and this time he hadn't heard a word. Yesterday's newspaper covered his lap.

'I am talking to you, George.' She tried again. 'I don't like seeing that poor butterfly struggling like that. He's trapped and will stay trapped in this awful room until someone lets him out. Either that or he dies.'

His eyes were closed and Camille watched the rise and fall of his chest for a moment as he snored softly. Her thoughts drifted back. Back to the day when her body didn't hurt, when she could run down stairs two at a time. Back to when she didn't have to swallow pills for this and have assistance for that, back to a time when he was part of her life.

Her children would never know the area of her heart that was closed to them. George, the man she'd loved all her life, the man she had not seen for almost fifty years. He was the reason she had chosen to come to Orange Grove.

He loved her for a while, she knew that. Until the day he'd said he felt caged like some wild animal at a zoo and left. He'd married. She'd married. Lives had been lived. There had been no contact and now, as she looked across at him, she knew he did not remember.

Gripping the sides of the armchair Camille pulled herself up. She stepped towards the window and cupped her shaking hand around the purple butterfly, feeling its soft velvety wings flutter against her fingers. Turning around, she began to walk towards the door as she whispered - 'Like trees in a forest, I was always there for him and now I am here for you...'

They found her an hour later. Face down on the floor, wisteria petals caught in her hair. The purple butterfly was gone.





Writer in Wonderland

BY LESLEY TRUCHET

Having sold or donated all our furniture in the UK, we arrived here in early March 2013 with an assortment of cardboard cartons and little else. Following various trips to French junk shops and retailers of household goods, our home began to lose its emptiness, hubby organised his workshop, I planted vegetables and we were ready to relish the abundant delights of life in the Aveyron – despite the sun's reluctance to put its hat on that season!

Regrets? Never. Previously dwelling on a busy road near Manchester, here we can wander naked in our garden (should the fancy take us) and play loud music without fear of complaint by our neighbours, who are situated so far from us that we think twice about walking to see them. When we venture out, every turn of the road opens up a vista of panoramic beauty, tempting us to visit the breathtakingly lovely villages nestling in the valleys or perched high atop the hills. With visiting friends we have explored the area, discovering stately châteaux, ancient churches and mediaeval towns. We have returned from trips to the local markets laden with local cured pork, cheeses made by farmer's wives and vegetables that don't resemble lumps of plastic. When we feel particularly self-indulgent we have satiated our appetites at several quaint restaurants, sampling the delicious local dishes.

Life doesn't get better than this, except for what I miss most ...

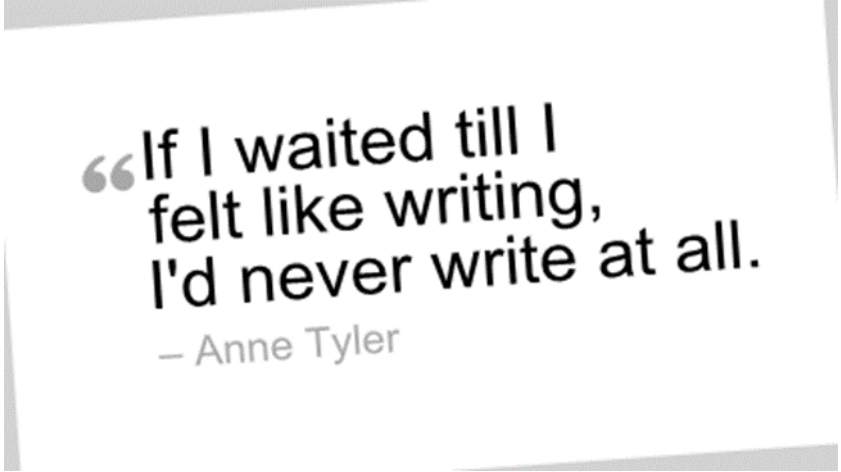
Several months after settling in, some English friends kindly invited us for a meal one evening. During the consumption of the culinary delights we discussed the various foods which we missed from across the Channel, such as bacon, fish and chips and Sunday lunch at the local pub. I pined for them too. However, what I missed most of all was the twice monthly meet up with my fellow writers in Oldham Lancs. They were a very friendly bunch of writers and I found the meetings inspiring and enjoyed them enormously.

Borrowing Alice's response to the Gryphon: *'It's no use going back to yesterday because I was a different person then,'* I turned my face away from the UK. The craving for bacon, fish and chips, real ale, and roast beef and Yorkshire pud gradually merged into fond memories, but the lack of fellow writers left a hole in my life. Here in France, with more precious

spare time than before, I indulged myself in a whole new gourmet adventure, swapping real ale for French wine and began to look around in the hope of meeting other creative writers.

I've had the pleasure and privilege to meet several local writers, and then in March of this year I was invited to join Writers Abroad, an online group of expat writers living in various parts of the globe. Since joining I have made a moderate contribution to the site's activities and I thoroughly enjoy e-meeting with the members. My writing life is once more enhanced with the support of lovely, like-minded people.

Of course things never go according to plan. Circumstances obliged me to seek ways of generating a little more income. Consequently, my treasured free time for writing is considerably reduced and my novel is progressing far too slowly. Ah, well, one can't have it all.



**“If I waited till I
felt like writing,
I'd never write at all.**

– Anne Tyler

Sister of No Mercy

by S.B. Borgersen

Between the lines
not so young when
you taught fear and cowering -
I learned tough and unbelieving.
Whatever Leonard says
I say he's wrong and hasn't
felt your rod to save the child from spoil.
Sweet smile encased in white
belies the truth
of brown beer bottles
in secret cupboards
waiting for the time
when all us girls
asleep in dorms
liberate you to
more sins.



This poem was first published in 2009 in Leonard Cohen You're Our Man, an anthology of 75 poems from around the world in response to poetry by Leonard Cohen in celebration of his 75th birthday. Sister of No Mercy (page 15) is one of Sue's biographical poems and responds to Mr. Cohen's To a Young Nun from his Book of Longing. Being published in this anthology was a turning point in Sue's writing career. Made even more special because Margaret Atwood's poem, Setting Leonard to Music, is on page 9.

From Here...

VANESSA COUCHMAN



What brought you to France, when and from where?

My husband lived in Limoges during the 1970s, before we met, and loved *la vie française*. We then spent many holidays in Southwest France. In 1997, we decided to buy a holiday home with a view to retiring to France later. However, the more we thought about it, the more we felt we could move over immediately. My husband was working as a freelance management consultant and could live anywhere within reason. I was in a well-paid but stressful job and approaching a career crossroads, but I felt I could do what he did. So I left my job and we moved here from London. It couldn't be more different!

What are the advantages of living in France for a writer?

I write historical fiction and France is blessed with a fascinating history and culture, as well as having magnificent countryside and delightful towns and villages. France provides endless inspiration and is also a country that appeals to many Brits, so there is a ready-made audience for writing about it.

Has your writing output increased since you came to France?

I have been writing fiction for only six years, so the answer has to be yes! In England, my jobs involved extensive writing and I now work as a freelance writer for clients. I also write a blog about life in France, *Life on La Lune*. I hope to increase my fiction output, since I'm winding down the paid work. Had I remained in the UK in a full-time job I might never have taken up writing fiction.

Is there anything you find hard to cope with in France?

I've lived here for more than 19 years, so it seems more like home now than England. However, I wasn't born here and when we get together with French friends, many of the cultural references are lost on me – singers, writers, humour, etc. I try to read a lot in French, but there will always be a cultural gulf. As a published author, there are far fewer opportunities in France to promote yourself and your work via bookshops, literary festivals, etc., although more openings are starting to appear.

What impact did France have on you emotionally, sensorally or intellectually and did you incorporate this into your writing?

It's had a huge impact. I'm now much more knowledgeable about French history and culture and this feeds directly into my writing. Living in France also introduced me to the island of Corsica, which has been French since 1768, where I set my first novel, *The House at Zaronza*. Despite being French, Corsica has its own fascinating history and culture and

has always been a place apart. It is also a spectacularly beautiful island and the scents, sights and sounds of Corsica appear in much of my writing.

What are local attitudes to writers?

We live in a rural community and many of our neighbours wouldn't have a view about writers or writing. However, professional French people who have retired here are very interested in writing and there is also quite a large British expat community. We started



an Anglo-French literary festival locally three years ago, which has gone from strength to strength and shows that there is an appetite to meet writers and hear about their work. I also belong to a writing group and a book group.

What have you learnt from living in France?

First, I have learned the language and am now pretty fluent. Learning a language is said to stave off Alzheimer's for several years, so I hope

to benefit! Living in another country broadens one's horizons. You also learn that everyday life is quite different from a holiday. Once you have got over the honeymoon period when everything is new and wonderful, a certain disenchantment can creep in, so you have to keep reminding yourself of the positive points. The pace of life is much slower here than in London and it takes longer to get things done, but the lack of stress is one of its charms. There is no perfect place to live on the planet.

Who is the audience for your writing and how much of it is local?

My audience is generally people who like historical fiction. I can't say how much of it is local but I've taken part in various literary events, so British expats know about my writing.

Describe a typical day in your life in France including your writing.

I like to read in bed when I wake up. Then I check my emails, Facebook, Twitter, etc. The internet is useful, but it's also a timewaster. I have to discipline myself to write. I have recently started 'journaling', i.e. spending 20 minutes each morning writing whatever comes into my head. This opens the creative channels. What I do next depends on deadlines. I still write for magazines and do some work for clients, and that has to come first. Otherwise, I try to write 500-1,000 words of my latest work in progress. I write at least one post a week for my blog, which focuses on the history and culture of Southwest France. I use afternoons for gardening and catching up on chores. This is France, so dinner is always accompanied by a glass (or two) of wine!



... to There

NICOLA CLEASBY

What brought you to Spain, when and from where?

This is going to sound really shallow but – sunshine. In my own defence, I come from the Lake District where it's usually cold and wet, and I love the sun. Plus, we (my husband and I) spent the four years before we came here in Scotland, a beautiful place but even colder

and wetter than the Lake District.

Before Scotland, we'd spent a few years working as volunteers in Africa and had come to love living in a warmer climate. At the same time, at that point my parents were still alive, and I wanted to be able to visit frequently. So when we were looking for somewhere to live, we went as far south as we could while still being able to get back to the UK easily. We bought a small almond farm in Spain, in the southern Alpujarras, a stunningly beautiful area between the Sierra Nevada mountains and the Mediterranean (with an average of 320 days of sun a year!) That was nearly fifteen years ago now, and we still love it.

What are the advantages of living in Spain for a writer?

Living costs are much lower here than anywhere in the UK. That meant, when I was starting out, I could devote my time to writing without fear of starvation. Plus, I live in the middle of nowhere, on a mountain, there's not a lot to distract me except for the view. But the main advantage is that it's a totally inspiring place. One of my favourite things is to sit under a fig tree, with a glass of wine, and wait for inspiration...

Has your writing output increased since you came to Spain?

I only really started writing after I came to Spain (except for a little I did when we worked as volunteers in Africa, where I was driven to writing my own books when I ran out of things to read.) So yes, my output has definitely increased. I'm actually a little obsessed now and writing has taken over my life. In the last five years, I've probably written between twenty and thirty novels and novellas.

Is there anything you find hard to cope with in Spain?

Probably cruelty to animals. I know this happens everywhere, but I can't drive past a bull ring without feeling a little sick. And totally powerless, as though I should be doing more to make the world a better place.

What impact did Spain have on you emotionally, sensorally or intellectually and did you incorporate this into your writing?

We live in a very isolated area and it's made me understand myself better. I'm a total introvert and I've always felt a little guilty about that. Now that I've accepted it, I'm much happier, and also make more of an effort to get out and meet people.

The area I live is so beautiful that it's a constant feast for the senses. Not only visually, but scent (crushed thyme as you walk along the mountain tracks) and taste (the sweetness of figs and grapes), can't help but spill over into the words I write.

Intellectually, it's a struggle for me because I spend a lot of time alone. That's where writing groups such as Writer's Abroad are so valuable.

What are local attitudes to writers?

I have no clue. I live five kilometres away from the nearest village and no one speaks English. So it's fair to say that none of them have ever read my books. And it's not something I talk about much—I still find it hard to actually say, I am a writer.

What have you learnt from living in Spain?

How to build a swimming pool? Actually how to build a lot of things.

Who is the audience for your writing and how much of it is local?

None of it is local. Actually most of my sales are made in the US, some in the UK, and a few other places.



Describe a typical day in your life in Spain including your writing.

We tend to get up with the sun, which means very early mornings in the summer, but sleeping in in the winter. First things are all animal related—walking the dogs (we have three), feeding Piggles my three-legged Vietnamese pot-bellied house pig, getting Gencie my mare and her goat friends breakfast, cleaning up after them, maybe going for a ride or a run.

Once all the chores are done, then I write. I tend to write new words in the morning and usually have a word count goal of maybe two or three thousand words. Afternoons are spent doing everything else, edits, marketing, blogging, playing on Facebook, lying under that fig tree, reading. Evenings we'll walk the dogs, maybe read or watch TV (We recently got Netflix and have been working our way through a number of TV series) and of course...drink wine.



He comes from Japan and speaks no English. But he sings and plays like an old English music hall pro. Does he know of what he sings?

He plays the triplet intro and winks at me. Winks? Did I really catch a wink? From the young man from Japan?

I assumed he would be so proper. From his first enquiring email to his final confirmation letter when he addressed me formally and announced his visit. That he would perform for the festival. I don't really know what I expected. But it wasn't this.

On arrival he presents me with a bonsai tree in a hand thrown matt black glazed pot. When he offers it to me he holds it high, turning it this way and that. Indicating that I should look closely and then step back and admire it from a few feet. This I do. I understood that offence can be construed from an innocent remark or gesture.

He stays with us. Eats local food. Enthuses with unusual sounds and plenty of smiles at lobsters. On the first evening he unpacks his instrument and plays Gershwin to us by firelight. Gershwin? Again I am taken aback. I expected Japanese music with foreign sounding chords and discords. With lyrics in a foreign tongue hopefully about love under the cherry blossom trees. Instead we have Rhapsody in Blue. And I am mesmerised.

Shigeto is a perfect house guest. By the weekend of the festival we are communicating. I learn the Japanese words for "would you like...?" and he is able to say "yes," or "no thank you very much."

I introduce him on stage at the festival. No-one has any idea of the music he will perform for us. The theatre is full of anticipation for a new experience. The Lancashire accent has us all looking around; at each other, at the stage, at the famous musician. And then he begins to sing and play:

Now I go cleaning windows to earn an honest bob/For a nosy parker it's an interestin' job

And I ask myself if he knows what a "bob" is, or a nosy parker come to that and then he launches into

*If you can see what I can see/When I'm cleanin' windows/Honeymoonin' couples too
You should see them bill 'n cool/You'd be surprised at things they do*

Someone at the back of the theatre cheers and applauds, the crowd begins to sing along:

*The blushin' bride, she looks divine/The bridegroom he is doin' fine
I'd rather have his job than mine/When I'm cleanin' windows*

Shigeto is in great form, grinning from ear to ear and I can't get over the talent, the versatility and the incredible ability he has to play and sing a kind of music that surely must feel unnatural to him.

*Pyjamas lyin' side by side/Ladies nighties I have spied
I've often seen what goes inside/When I'm cleanin' windows*

At this point in the song there is an intricate instrumental piece that George Formby was renowned for. The hall is so silent; I am sure we are all collectively holding our breath. And then we run into the finale with great aplomb:

*An old maid walks around the floor/She's so fed up, one day I'm sure
She'll drag me in and lock the door/When I'm cleanin' windows
When I'm cleanin' windows...*

Shigeto smiles. He takes his bow and walks elegantly across the stage to the wings. The audience is on its feet. Cheering. "Encore, encore," they call. I have no idea if Shigeto understands, but then he appears. He has removed his jacket and his white shirt is reflected in his pale face. He speaks, in well-rehearsed English, "I will now play Japanese music for you," he says, haltingly, "the song is about two people who love. It is about the cherry blossom tree where they meet."

We all sit. He plays. He sings. The music is transporting. It takes us to what we think of as Shigeto's world.

And he has ventured into ours.

*"So the writer who breeds more words
than he needs, is making a chore
for the reader who reads."*
-DR. SEUSS

Let Your Adopted Home Enrich Your Storytelling

BY DIANNE ASCROFT



For a writer, moving to a new city or country can be fortuitous, providing the inspiration for stories you never imagined you would write before you arrived at your new home. I'm a Canadian and, for more than a quarter of a century, I have lived in various cities and towns throughout Britain. Twelve years ago my husband and I returned to his childhood home in rural County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. Since I settled here with him, the ideas for many of the historical stories I write have been sparked by snippets I hear or read about past events in my adopted county.

For example, not long after we moved to County Fermanagh, I first heard from neighbours the tale of the Coonian or Cooneen ghost, a poltergeist that local lore says drove a widow, Bridget Murphy, and her six children from their farm cottage and across the sea to America. The events happened at the beginning of the last century in a farm cottage only a few miles from where I live and one Sunday when my husband and I were out for a walk, we went to see the house. At the time, it was in the middle of a forestry plantation and could barely be glimpsed from the road (the forest was felled this spring, leaving the house starkly visible amidst the stubbly, deforested fields).

We jumped over a small ditch, or sheugh as they call them here, beside the road and picked our way through the trees until we came to a greying, run-down yet rather forbidding building in a small clearing. Although we saw nothing otherworldly that day, the house had an eerie atmosphere and I wouldn't have wanted to remain there after dark.

After visiting the house, the story intrigued me even more and I did a bit of delving into the tale of the ghost. It's not difficult to find articles online about it but they can be confusing. Details conflict and the tale seems to have grown as it was re-told over the years. So I went back to earlier sources. I read contemporary local newspaper articles (published in 1913) and Shane Leslie's *Ghost Book* (first published in 1955) to get the story more or less as it was originally told. The old newspapers are especially fascinating and entertaining as they really bring alive the county as it was a century ago. As I delved into accounts of the events at the farmhouse, I could see the scenes and the Murphy family in my mind. I couldn't help wondering about them and what must it have been like to live in their house. And how it felt to have their friends and neighbours withdraw from them in fear. This imagining was the starting point for my fictional short story, *An Unbidden Visitor*.

I would encourage writers to keep your eyes and ears open when you settle in a new place. Learn about the history and legends of the area. If a particular historical event or legend grabs your imagination, delve deeper and learn more about it. Visit the exact place where it happened so you can experience the atmosphere there. Ask local people to tell you what they know about the incident. A combination of historical facts and local anecdotes will give you a wealth of information, allowing you to see the incident from different angles. When you are familiar with the incident, or possibly legend, that has caught your attention, let your imagination have free rein to develop your own story using all the information you have garnered. Your story may become a retelling or interpretation of the past event or it may become a completely new story inspired by what you have learned about the place where you live. Either way, if you take time to learn about the history of your adopted home, it is bound to enrich your own storytelling

The Typo Prankster

BY LESLEY TRUCHET

I have a typo prankster; he squats in my PC,
 he tampers with my writing, with apparent fiendish glee.
 No matter how attentively my manuscript I edit,
 he lays bare some glaring errors, much to my discredit.
 Though I make a supreme effort to submit my script just right,
 I fear some luckless editor will deem it total – trite!

How to Swear Like a Dutchie

BY ANGELA WILLIAMS



Last Sunday afternoon I was cycling home along the Amsterdam canals enjoying the quietness on the roads and while my thoughts were elsewhere, I jumped a red light. A taxi skidded round the corner and the driver shouted, *kankerhoer!* at me through his window. I must have delayed his journey by at least 0.02 seconds so enough reason for him to call me a whore and wish me cancer. I can laugh about it now but in my early days of living here an incident like that would have had me in tears. Living amongst the Dutch is easier with a thick skin. Nowadays I'm not fazed by people wishing terminal illnesses on each other; years ago I found it shocking.

Living abroad might conjure images of perennial holidays; sipping wine by a swimming pool in balmy climes, but expat life also means learning to cope with cultural differences that can be the source of daily challenges. A sociolinguist might suggest that this harsh way of swearing is a by-product of the

direct Dutch culture. The Dutch are well known for their frankness and the British are well known for their, ahem, how shall I put it, beating about the bush. So while on the surface the Dutch and British may appear to share a lot of cultural values, one only has to look at communication styles to discover significant differences. The British often use downgraders in their speech, which is a way to soften bad news. So instead of saying; 'the hotel room was filthy,' the British would say, 'the room wasn't very clean,' or 'the room could have been cleaner'. The average Dutch person would just tell it like it is, without any softeners. The British can swear and behave badly of course, but as far as I know the Dutch are the only people who swear by wishing illnesses on their enemies.

The most popular illnesses the Dutch bandy about are: syphilis, cancer, cholera, typhoid, tuberculosis and the good old plague! Just wishing a cold or the flu on someone won't cut the mustard. The rule is that the illnesses have to be life-threatening. *Krijg de cholera* means I hope you get cholera or alternatively you can say *choleralijer*, which means you already suffer from cholera. The same variation applies to all the other illnesses and then you can jolly them up a bit by adding a gender-specific term of abuse. The variety allows room for a certain amount of creative license. I've lived here long enough now to be able to swear in Dutch but I've never sworn using illnesses. The disease names just don't come to me in the heat of the moment. I guess you probably have to be a native Dutch speaker to be able to swear in this unique way. Anyway, I don't like swearing in Dutch; in fact I have a *pesthekel eraan* (I hate it like the plague).

Farewell for now

BY LESLEY TRUCHET

Your spirit draws me to this place
memories bare my sole to ache
here you took me in virgin embrace
my love heat you teased awake.

Your lips bestowed such exquisite bliss
my core unfurled to your lovemaking skill
senses aroused by your smouldering kiss
sweet ecstasy, you took control of my will.

Our spirits entwined with the passage of years
merged in passionate splendour.
now rapidly falling, my grieving tears
salving the pain so tender.

Our love endured strong, we each strayed never
your sudden demise forced us to part
we'll reunite up above, our bond locked forever
farewell for now, keeper of my heart.



Making Good

BY VANESSA COUCHMAN

François claps you on the shoulder. You flinch.

‘You’ve got no ambition, you lot,’ he says. ‘Look at me. I started the same as you, but I got there through hard work. And contacts. That’s how you get on.’

You look into your *pastis* and bite your lip.

At first, you didn’t recognise the fat tycoon with the gold watch and bulging wallet. Was he really that weedy kid from school? But even then François dealt in marbles like share-options. And he always got what you wanted. He got Justine, then he dropped her, then she left. You clench your jaw and glare at his distorted jowls through the bottom of your glass. The air is thick with Gauloise smoke and hostility.

François pats your arm. ‘And old Marcel here. With your dad in the motor trade, you didn’t need to find a job, did you?’

You glance down at your oil-stained overalls.

‘That reminds me,’ François says. ‘Have you seen my car?’

A gleaming black saloon the size of a small tank is parked outside. A battered builder’s van and a rusty Renault 5 stand alongside like beggars pestering an affluent tourist.

‘Bet you’d like to get your hands on that, Marcel.’

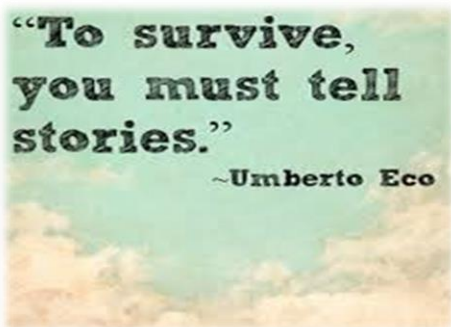
Wouldn’t you just?

François drains his *pastis*. ‘Well, I can’t chew over old times all night. I promised to stay with my mum. Might as well leave the car here.’ He saunters out into the dusk.

Next morning, you watch the black car glide past the garage and gather speed downhill.

Later, the *gendarmes* question everyone. But it remains a mystery why François’ car plunged through the barrier and rolled down the cliff until it was mangled scrap at the bottom.

You shrug and examine your fingernails. ‘These modern cars. They don’t make them like they used to.’



How do you describe your story?

BY ALYSON HILBOURNE



You know the situation. You are in conversation with someone and let slip you are writing a novel or short story or even a poem.

"What's it about?" they ask.

"Well," you say, taking a deep breath. "It's about two brothers who grow up separately..." and five minutes later you are still explaining the outline of your story and your listener's eyes have taken on a glazed expression.

This is the point at which you need to know the theme of your story. Can you sum it up in one word? Is it a story about 'revenge'? Does one brother have something to pay the other brother back for?

Is it 'jealousy'? Does one brother envy the life the other had?

Is it 'rekindling of family ties' (sometimes one word won't do and you need a phrase) or is it 'ambition' or 'power'?

Knowing and being able to explain the theme of your work is valuable when you want to sell it to an editor or agent. Whenever I submit my work to magazines, I tell the editor this is a story about 'love', 'rivalry', 'distrust', or 'loneliness'. Yes, I then have to go on to give a brief synopsis as well, but the theme has already given the editor an idea of what sort of story it is.

Whether you know the theme of your story before you start to write depends on your style of working. If you are someone who allows the characters in the book to dictate the direction it goes in, you may not realise the theme of your work until the end.

I am far more of a plotter (and plodder) when it comes to writing. I have to plan out the story before I go and I often choose a theme before I begin. That way I can ensure my central character always acts in accordance with the theme. Is she looking for romance in a love story? Does he want to kill someone if he is out for revenge?

We know, for instance, that Harry Potter will continue his struggle against Lord Voldemort whatever the odds. As he grows older he is challenged in many ways, both as an ordinary teenager in terms of schoolwork, friendships and romantic attachments, and the emotional struggles of stress and worry, but these are just tests for him on his inexorable journey to prevent the dark wizard from becoming immortal and subjugating everyone mortal and magical to his will. It is perhaps simplistic to say the theme in the

Harry Potter books are good versus evil, but ultimately this does carry the plot forward and whatever the temptations, we know Harry will not go over to the dark side.

So, as you plan your next masterpiece, be it literary fiction or a flash fiction, give some thought to the theme of your work and make sure everything ties in with it. It should actually make the plot line more cohesive and easier to write. And it will make the story much easier to explain next time somebody asks...



I feel that discussing story-writing in terms of plot, character, and theme is like trying to describe the expression on a face by saying where the eyes, nose, and mouth are.

— *Flannery O'Connor* —

AZ QUOTES

Privateer Days Parade

PHOTOS BY SUE BORGERSEN



The Privateer Days Parade takes place in Liverpool Nova Scotia each summer.

Below is brief history of Liverpool's privateers (text borrowed from Privateer Days website.)

Privateers were privately owned ships that were authorized by a government to raid ships from other countries - a form of legalized piracy on the high seas. The men who served aboard these ships were also referred to as "privateers."

After the American Revolution, American privateer ships ranged up and down Nova Scotia's South Shore, ambushing merchant shipments, disrupting commerce, and occasionally stealing ships right out of Liverpool's wharves. Desperate to defend their homes, their families, and their livelihoods, many leading citizens of the Town of Liverpool petitioned the British government for the right to retaliate against these ocean raiders. In 1777, these citizens were granted authorization to launch privateer ships of their own.



Liverpool quickly emerged as one of British North America's leading privateer ports, eventually deploying more privateer vessels than even the much larger city of Halifax. Ships like the Lucy, the Rover, and the Liverpool Packet gained international renown for their workmanship and speed,

and the prowess of their crews inspired respect and fear.

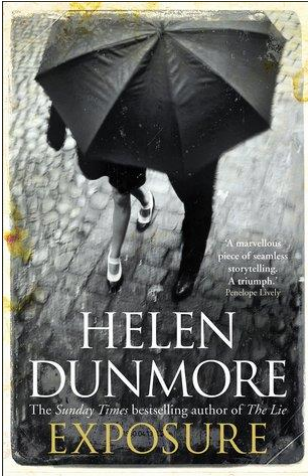
Although privateers no longer roam the seas, and the day of the great sailing ships has passed, Liverpool's significance in maritime history lives on in the town's nickname to this day: *PORT OF THE PRIVATEERS*. The annual Privateer Days summer festival is a proud celebration of Liverpool's colourful privateer heritage.



BOOK REVIEWS

Exposure by Helen Dunmore

Reviewed by **Alyson Hilbourne**



Set during the Cold War, Helen Dunmore's novel, *Exposure*, is the story of a spy network in Admiralty and its exposure after one of the network has an accident. Since he is hospitalized and unable to return a top-secret file, Giles calls on an old friend, Simon, to help. Simon picks up the file but immediately regrets his actions.

As the story unfolds we learn Simon has a past that he hasn't revealed to his wife, Lily. The secrets, which he thought lay buried, are brought to light as the spy network tries to implicate him in the disappearance of the file. Both Simon and Lily are tested to the limits by the threat of exposure and betrayal.

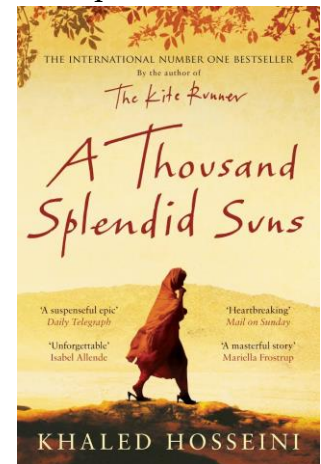
Although this is a story about spies and the Cold War it is more about human emotion and reaction to threats and intimidation.

Dunmore keeps the pace going through the story, drip-feeding information about the characters through a series of well-integrated flashbacks. Her language is lyrical. "His leg, the pain, all gone like the light as you fall down a shaft." The use of the present tense makes the story very immediate.

Her descriptions of life in early 1960's England are well done and her characters spring from the page, especially the strong and caring Lily, and the seedy, disreputable, Giles. An excellent read and thoroughly recommended.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

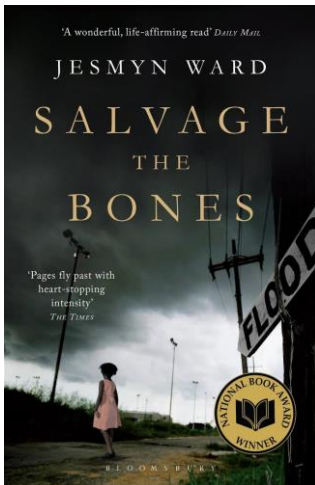
Reviewed by **Hamish Macdonald**



Valérie Bourgeois' beautiful French translation, 'Mille Soleils Splendides' (2007), by Khaled Hosseini made me not only appreciate the skills required of translators but enhanced my appreciation of the quality of the story telling and demonstrated how well crafted prose crosses language barriers. Described by the author as a 'redemptive' novel to make up for the marginalising of women in his first novel, 'The Kite Runner', it draws also on his vivid childhood memories of the patriarchal society and diverse culture of Afghanistan against the background of the Soviet invasion, withdrawal, and the power vacuum filled by the warring factions at the end of the Cold War. Two women, Miriam and Laila are forced by traumatic circumstances to become the rival wives of an older man wishing to father a son. Made to wear the burka, and effectively enslaved, a bond develops between them. A powerful and compelling read.

‘Salvage the Bones’ by Jesmyn Ward

Reviewed by Jill Brown



This novel covers a period of twelve days, as hurricane Katrina builds up in the Gulf of Mexico and then strikes land. An impoverished black family living on the threatened Mississippi coast are making desperate preparations for its arrival.

The story is told through the eyes of fourteen-year-old Esch, who recently discovered she is pregnant. Her family of three brothers, (one the doting owner of a Pitbull – their relationship an essential part of the story) and a heavy-drinking father attempt to stock what food they can and build defences, whilst still grieving the loss of their mother in childbirth.

Their familial love, courage and tenacity are portrayed unsentimentally but in poetic, emotive prose. This is not for the squeamish – life is raw and some of the dogfights described are vicious. But it is an intense, big-hearted and gripping read, right up to its heart-pounding climax.

This Big Buddha (Tian Tan) is made of bronze and is one of the largest seated Buddha statues in the world. It is 34 metres high (112 feet) and is a very popular tourist attraction. © LAURA BESLEY



RECIPES

From the Canine Cake collection by Sue Borgersen:

Liver and Sweet Potato (or Banana) Birthday (or anytime) Cake for Dogs.



Ingredients:

1 lb sliced liver, steamed until no longer pink (at least 15 minutes)
drained, cooled and ground fine in a food processor
1 large sweet potato boiled* until tender and mashed (or puree two bananas).
*Tip - your sweet potato can be boiled in the juices drained from the steamed liver.
2 eggs
1 tbs oil
1 cup (85g) of oats
5 oz or (140g) of flour (we use gluten free rice flour)

Optional Frosting:

1/2 cup (300g) pureed cooked beetroots (for your diva dog)
1/2 cup (225g) pureed cooked blueberries (for your dapper dog)
a good dollop of cream cheese

Method:

For the cake, beat all ingredients together until you have a good looking batter. Pour into greased and lined cake tin (we have a bone shaped silicone cake pan which doesn't need lining or greasing.)

Bake at 350 F (180 C) for approx 40 minutes or until firm to the touch. Leave to cool.

For the frosting, blend cream cheese with the pureed beetroot or blueberries until smooth and spread over and around the cool cake. Decorate to your heart's content.

If you just don't fancy liver, substitute pureed sardines, vegetables and/or fruit.

The above cake can be cut into small cubes and will make perfect meals-to-go for picnics. It will keep for three days in the fridge, a month in the freezer. But we are lucky if it lasts a day.

Next time: Fish Cakes and No Fail Pill Pockets.

The Easiest and Best Chocolate Cake You Will Ever Make!

BY CRILLY O'NEIL

Lightly grease and line (with baking paper) a 30cm round cake tin or spring form tin and set oven at 150°C (300°F)

Melt the ingredients below in a large saucepan but do NOT allow to become too hot!

250g butter
200g dark chocolate
2 tablespoons instant coffee (powdered)
1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (225g) castor sugar
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (350ml) of water



Remove saucepan from the heat, cool for a few minutes then beat in -

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (350g) of self-raising flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80g) of cocoa

When this is done –

Beat in 2 eggs & 2 teaspoons of vanilla essence

Pour into cake tin and bake on the middle shelf for approximately an hour.

A skewer inserted into the centre of the cake should come out clean if cake is cooked.

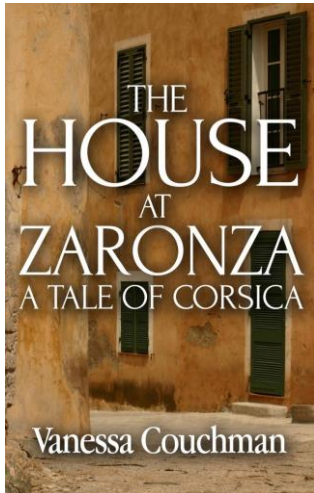
Leave cake in tin for 10 minutes before turning onto a cake tray to cool completely.

Sift icing sugar on the top when cool and decorate with strawberries.

Serve with whipped cream if desired.



MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS



The House at Zaronza by Vanessa Couchman

"Beautifully told, word perfect, totally absorbing and wonderfully researched."

"An absolute gem."

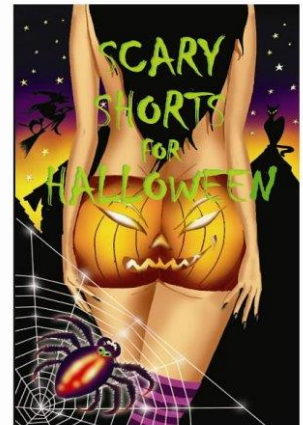
"Outstanding."

Set in early 20th century Corsica and on the Western Front during World War I, *The House at Zaronza* is loosely inspired by a true tale. It tells the story of Maria Orsini, the daughter of a bourgeois family in a Corsican village. A new schoolmaster comes to the village and they carry on a secret romance, but Maria's family has other ideas for her future. She becomes a volunteer nurse during World War I and the novel follows her fortunes through the war and beyond.

The House at Zaronza was judged in the top four in the Flash 500 Novel Opening Competition in 2013 and is published by Crooked Cat Publishing. Available in paperback and e-book editions from [Amazon](#).

Scary Shorts featuring Angela Williams

A 'feel good' and 'do good' book containing true, contemporary ghost stories from across the United Kingdom. It includes a story by Yvette Fielding, presenter of Living TV's 'Most Haunted' who attended the launch at The London Dungeon. Contributors include amongst others: Kathryn Brennan, Tina Brown, Ann Caulfield, Kathleen Croft, Elizabeth Crooks, Sasha Fenton, Yvette Fielding, Della Galton, Liza Granville, Hilary Halliwell, Jim Harwood, Raymond Humphreys, Jan Jones, Carolyn Lewis, Lisa Main, Sue Moorcroft, Sandy Neville, and WA member, Angela Williams. Available from [Amazon](#)



WA Members

Many thanks to all the WA members around the world for their support in producing the WA magazine:

[Dianne Ascroft](#), Northern Ireland

Laura Besley, Hong Kong

Susan Borgersen, Nova Scotia

Jill Brown, France

Nicola Cleasby ([Nina Croft](#)), Spain

[Vanessa Couchman](#) France

Alyson Hilbourne, Japan

Jo Lamb ([Louise Charles](#)), Italy

Hamish Macdonald, France

Chris Nedahl, Spain

Crilly O'Neil, Australia

Sally Robinson, The Netherlands

Maggie Shelton, Arizona

[Bieke Stengos](#), Canada

Lesley Truchet, France

[Angela Williams](#) (Susan Carey), The Netherlands

WA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: JO LAMB



Jo Lamb writes under the pseudonym of Louise Charles and writes in the short and long form. She has self-published three books, *The Duke's Shadow*, *The Good Expat Life* and *The Morning Gift*. She has plans to dust off three more drafts that languish on her desk. Her next project will be entering the world of fantasy which she hopes to explore during NaNoWriMo in

November. Jo lives in Central Italy with her husband, Simon and myriad dogs, cats and chickens. Their latest addition is an orphaned kitten, Pootie, rescued from the centre of Amatrice which was hit by an earthquake in August. For more information, visit her website [Louise Charles](#) linked above.

Feedback

Have you got a couple of minutes?

We hope you've enjoyed our fifth issue of WA magazine and would love to hear what you think. Your feedback would be greatly appreciated and help us to improve our publication. Those who leave feedback will be entered into a draw to win a free e-copy of our Anthology.

The winner of our May feedback was Kathryn Means selected from twelve readers who provided us with invaluable thoughts on our publication. We really do appreciate your time and input.

Please click on [WA Mag Feedback](#)- it really does only take a couple of minutes.

And you can email us your comments at [expatwritersabroad{at}gmail{dot}com](mailto:expatwritersabroad@gmail.com)

Best Wishes from

All at Writers Abroad

www.writersabroad.com (where you will find downloads to all issues of our Magazine)

Our Next Issue will be out in the Spring of 2017 - sign up [here](#) to get your free copy in your inbox!

Tin Hau, Goddess of the Sea, is worshiped by anyone with ties to the sea. Temples are found all over Hong Kong. Some of them are now inland due to extensive land reclamation. © LAURA BESLEY

