

# The Writers' Guild Weekly e-bulletin No. 371, Friday 15th May 2009

On the Guild's blog this week at [writersguild.blogspot.com](http://writersguild.blogspot.com):

- [Multilingualism In Drama](#)
- [AmazonEncore \(sic\)](#)
- [What the Dickens?](#)
- [John Furia Jr. 1929-2009](#)
- [C4 boss criticises BBC for US acquisitions](#)
- [Short Circuit writing competition](#)
- [Sony Award winners;](#)  
[The Drama Award](#)  
[The Comedy Award](#)  
[US TV to cut writing jobs](#)
- [Join the Guild for just 50](#)
- [What we owe Alan Plater](#)
- [Writing with constraints](#)

## **Guild News**

**1. The Writers' Guild's 50th Anniversary**

**2. Questionnaires for Guild Playwrights**

## **Industry News**

**3. New Kindle raises copyright query**

#### **4. Launch of Wales's first complete On-line Drama Series by Cyfle**

### **Guild Events**

#### **5. Meet the Agents in Brighton**

### **Events**

#### **6. Beg Borrow Steal - a new initiative to develop film scripts (Newcastle)**

### **Courses and Workshops**

#### **7. Plays and Screenplays MA – Two Years Part Time (Evenings) City University London**

#### **8. I didn't get where I am today by writing: The Secrets behind Effective Networking**

#### **9. Carte Blanche: A New Women's Writing Group (Newcastle)**

### **Opportunities**

#### **10. Short Circuit writing competition**

#### **11. My Latitude**

#### **12. Film Story Competition**

#### **13. Ulla's Nib Issue 8 - Submissions**

#### **14. Writing Tutor Needed**

### **What Members Are Getting Up To**

## Guild News

### 1. The Writers' Guild's 50th Anniversary

Thanks to all members who spread the word about our 50th anniversary this week, as we received some lovely birthday cards and also heard the news literally talked about on the street. We are also delighted to report that **50 new members joined the Guild on its 50th birthday**, which was a marvellous way to celebrate the occasion and bolster the union.

And furthermore, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those members who have contributed to the Guild, its negotiations and services over our fantastic half century. A few of the founding members of the Guild were treated to lunch on Wednesday 13th May to commemorate the anniversary, share stories from the early days of the union and raise a glass to its future.

Here's to another 50 years!

### 2. Questionnaires for Guild Playwrights

All Writers' Guild members who write for theatre should have received a questionnaire this week, which we've been asked to distribute to as wide a range of British playwrights as possible. It is from a group conducting research on behalf of Arts Council England to assess new writing in the British theatre from 2003 to 2008, to see what effect the Arts Council's big injection of money had, and to look at more profound trends (like the move towards greater intervention by theatres in script development, more collaborative procedures, etc). The group includes our President, David Edgar. The research will culminate in a report with recommendations about the future of new writing in the subsidised theatre, to be presented to the Arts Council in the summer.

If you write for theatre but have not yet received a copy of the questionnaire, please email [naomi@writersguild.org.uk](mailto:naomi@writersguild.org.uk) to request one.

The Writers' Guild's Theatre Committee is also going to be independently surveying members about their experience of working in theatre, for use by the Guild in its lobbying and various ongoing campaigns, so playwrights should expect to receive a further email from us next week. This study will be conducted online.

We would be very grateful if playwrights in the Guild would take the time to contribute to both pieces of research, which I'm sure will generate some invaluable information for British theatre.

If you have any queries about either study, please do not hesitate to give the Guild office a call.

## Industry News

### 3. New Kindle raises copyright query

As Alana Semuels reports in The L.A. Times, following criticism by the US Authors' Guild over the 'text-to-speech' capability of the new Kindle 2 electronic reader, Amazon has given publishers and authors the power to disable the function.

Amazon made it clear Friday that its reversal didn't mean it agreed with that interpretation of copyright law.

"Kindle 2's experimental text-to-speech feature is legal: no copy is made, no derivative work is created and no performance is being given," the company said. "Nevertheless, we strongly believe many rights holders will be more comfortable with the text-to-speech feature if they are in the driver's seat."

Ben Sheffner, a Los Angeles copyright attorney and author of the blog Copyrights & Campaigns, said Amazon probably reversed course to maintain good relationships with authors, not because of legal concerns.

Sheffner said that Amazon probably wouldn't need different rights to sell an e-book with the text-to-speech function enabled, but that book contracts could differ dramatically so there was no way to know for sure.

In a comment on the WGGB blog before Amazon's change of heart, leading British agent Meg Davis expressed concerns about the text-to-speech function.

As an agent, I'm very much keeping an eye on this. As a general rule, the more rights you can split and have paid for separately, the more money the writer makes. So not keen on an audio facility on this, which will erode the already fragile audio market. Even though Kindle's probably lost a lot of ground due to the Sony getting here first, manufacturers of the next generation of eReaders will not doubt seek to add functions such as this (as is the trend with any new technology), and we need to be vigilant.

Amazon says that more than 230,000 titles are now available to download to a Kindle, and early reviews suggest that the new version improves the device's usability.

It's not clear, however, when it will be available in the UK. As Bobbie Johnson writes in The Guardian, to sell Kindle 2 in this country, Amazon will need to overcome several hurdles relating to the use of its wireless technology.

#### **4. Launch of Wales's first complete On-line Drama Series by Cyfle**

"Break Free" is a 12 episode On-line Drama which launched across various internet sites on Tuesday 12 May 2009. Written by six freelance writers on the Cyfle Writing for Multi-platform scheme, the groundbreaking pilot has its own YouTube channel accompanied by a whole stimulating package of Multi-platform elements – including MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and Blogs.

The launch comes half way through the innovative, six month, part-time training scheme which allows six of the best writers and producers in Wales to develop their screenwriting skills to the On-line World. It consists of an unique combination of weekend workshops, expert speakers, on-line mentoring and collaborative projects. Visit one of the following websites to view:

[www.breakfree2009.co.uk](http://www.breakfree2009.co.uk)

[www.breakfreewiththeguru.co.uk](http://www.breakfreewiththeguru.co.uk)

[www.youtube.com/user/breakfree2009.co.uk](http://www.youtube.com/user/breakfree2009.co.uk)

## **Guild Events**

#### **5. Meet the Agents in Brighton**

In association with the Writers' Guild, join top literary agents working with playwrights, screenwriters and authors in conversation with Chris Taylor, Director, New Writing South.

Find out if and when you need an agent, exactly what agents do and how they can help your career. Find out how to approach agents, when to send unsolicited scripts and learn what agents really look for when they take on new writers.

The evening also offers an informal opportunity to network and ask your own questions. The cost of tickets is £15. For more information or to book a place visit the New Writing South website.

Date: Tuesday 2nd June, 6.30pm – 9pm

Venue: Nightingale Theatre, Brighton

With:

- Broo Doherty - Wade Doherty Literary Agency
- Simon Trewin - United Agents
- Rupert Heath - Rupert Heath Literary Agency

## Events

### **6. Beg Borrow Steal - a new initiative to develop film scripts (Newcastle)**

Beg Borrow Steal is an events and performance company based at the Tyneside Irish Centre in Newcastle. Professional actors will read screenplays from new and emerging writers to an invited audience for feedback and exposure with a view to developing the writers' work. The event will be held at the Tyneside Irish Centre on Thursday 23 July 2009. For a chance to get involved in this, please submit your script along with a brief bio and synopsis of your film by Wednesday 20 May. Submissions and enquiries can be emailed to [joanprods@aol.com](mailto:joanprods@aol.com).

## Courses and Workshops

## **7. Plays and Screenplays MA – Two Years Part Time (Evenings) City University London**

City University is now interviewing for the Sep 2009 intake

Recent guest speakers include Julian Fellowes, Olivia Hetreed and Ronan Bennett

“Setting a gold standard amongst MA programmes... The scripts produced are equal to and in some cases of a higher standard than those produced in top film schools internationally. “

<http://www.city.ac.uk/journalism/courses/postgrad/cwplays/index.html>

## **8.I didn't get where I am today by writing: The Secrets behind Effective Networking**

Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2pm-5pm in Shaftesbury Avenue

[Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back.](#)

Janice Day's book GETTING IT OFF MY CHEST is coming out in July 2009 and is currently involved in a bidding war with three national newspapers who all want to print extracts. She is co-writing romcoms for German television with a writer who has had 17 films produced in Germany, and co-writing a situation comedy with Raymond Allen, the writer of *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*.

Only a lucky few have so much talent that the world knocks on their door with a contract in one hand and a pen in the other. The rest of us have to make our own opportunities. We can work hard to add craft skills and experience to whatever God gave us, but the other vital ingredient for success is networking. If you feel that you are not completely satisfied at the end of the course Janice will happily refund your money.

£75.00. £60.00 to Writers Guild members. Discount code UEYW82GE

Book now at [janiceday.wordpress.com](http://janiceday.wordpress.com). Places are limited.

## **9. Carte Blanche: A New Women's Writing Group (Newcastle)**

This new women's writing group will meet on Thursdays at 9.30am-12.30am, upstairs at the Brunswick Church (behind Fenwick's) in Newcastle and welcome you to join them from this week. Guest tutors will be: Anna Woodford (pictured) on 7th May, Linda France on 18th June and Peter Mortimer on 2nd July.

The cost is £60 for ten weeks (this includes all three guest tutor dates), £15 for each individual tutor-led session, or £10 for each group-led session. Places for the three guest tutor days are limited, so please book early. Email Liz for further information at [lizkirsopp@madasafish.com](mailto:lizkirsopp@madasafish.com).

## Opportunities

### 10. Short Circuit writing competition

The [Media Lunch Club](#) is running Short Circuit, a search for the best 10 minute drama script on the theme of: "A discussion about film or TV over lunch"

You have to be [a member of the Lunch Club](#), a non-profit making networking organisation, to apply.

Submissions Deadline: All script submissions to be received by Gareth Owen, c/o The Lunch Club, Pinewood Studios, Iver Heath, Bucks SL0 ONH ~ or via email to [lunch@lunch-club.org.uk](mailto:lunch@lunch-club.org.uk) by Thursday, 30th June 2009

The best three scripts, as chosen by the judging panel, will be rehearsed and staged by a well-known film director and by actors, and performed at a special evening in front of the Media Lunch Club audience and guests in late September 2009.

There will be an opportunity for the winning script to be produced as a short film by members of the Brighton Film School, plus a year's subscription to [Twelve-Point scriptwriter magazine](#) for the winner and finalists.

### 11. My Latitude

The creative writing free paper **Notes from the Underground** is teaming up with the good people at **Latitude Festival**, which is obviously very exciting. They are

running a short story competition the winner of which gets to read their story in the Literary Arena of the Suffolk festival this July.

The winner will of course as a performer be able to stick around at the festival and hang out with all of the movers and shakers that go with the territory of a performer's wristband. If you are looking for validation then look no further. The simple requirement is that you send in your short stories to Notes (email address: [info@notesfromtheunderground.co.uk](mailto:info@notesfromtheunderground.co.uk)) and that they are no longer than 2000 words and that you do so before 10:00am this July 1st. Notes from the Underground will then decide on a shortlist of three, with the winner to be announced on July 8th.

Latitude festival will take place July 16th-19th in Henham Park, Suffolk, and with acts like Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds and Doves already confirmed along with writers such as Richard Milward and Danny Wallace in the Literary Arena, it really is a great opportunity to get your scribblings noticed.

## **12. Film Story Competition**

The purpose of the FILM STORY COMPETITION is not only to promote excellent story ideas but to also encourage authors and to assist them in the development of their scripts.

*Award* : the TWO winners win a free place on a Script Factory course of their choice in London.

Participants to the competition should send their movie story (3 pages maximum, written in English, French or Dutch). Texts must be sent by post or email to: [competition@fffb.be](mailto:competition@fffb.be) This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it .

Selected by a jury of professionals, the two winners will be invited for the weekend in Europe's capital to receive their prizes at the Festival's Awards Ceremony held on July 5, 2009.

**DEADLINE : June 5th, 2009**

FFFB vzw – Film Story Competition

Flageyplein 7 – 1050 Brussels – BELGIUM

E-mail : [competition@fffb.be](mailto:competition@fffb.be)

[www.fffb.be](http://www.fffb.be)

[www.scenaristengilde.be](http://www.scenaristengilde.be)

### 13. Ulla's Nib Issue 8 - Submissions

Ulla's Nib are especially interested in articles and reviews, if you have an idea, email them. Still keep sending poems, any length and short-fiction of up to 2000 words. **£50 star prize for best submission.**

Email submissions to: [editor@creativewritersnetwork.org](mailto:editor@creativewritersnetwork.org) or hard copy to CWN, 109-113 Royal Ave., Belfast, BT1 1FF. Handwritten submissions cannot be considered. Please include your name, postal address and daytime contact telephone number. If you are selected they will not contact you, but you will receive a copy of the issue in the post. **Submission deadline for issue 8 has been extended to May 18, 2009.**

### 14. Writing Tutor Needed

Experienced screen writer with tutoring skills required for MA Screen course at Drama Centre London. Sense of practical application in relation to other pathways (acting and directing) crucial. Contact Alan Dunnett, Course Director: [a.dunnett@csm.arts.ac.uk](mailto:a.dunnett@csm.arts.ac.uk)

## What Members Are Getting Up To

\*\*\*

PERRIE BALTHAZAR wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Thursday 21st May.

\*\*\*

KAREN BROWN wrote the episode of *Moving On - The Rain Has Stopped* going out on BBC1 at 2:15pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

RHIANNON COUSINS has written the first and fifth episodes of the new online drama *Break Free*. To find out more, please visit [www.breakfree2009.co.uk](http://www.breakfree2009.co.uk), [www.breakfreewiththeguru.co.uk](http://www.breakfreewiththeguru.co.uk), [www.youtube.com/user/breakfree2009.co.uk](http://www.youtube.com/user/breakfree2009.co.uk)

\*\*\*

DAVID CROFT and JIMMY PERRY co-wrote the episode of *Dad's Army "The Royal Train"* going out on BBC1 at 7:50pm on Saturday 16th May.

\*\*\*

MARY CUTLER'S dramatisation of *Falco: Poseidon's Gold* begins on Radio 4 at 7:45pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

DAVID EDGAR'S radio play *Something Wrong and out the Mouth* is a love story told at the border between memory and fiction, trust and betrayal, East and West. Soho, 1958: an insistent American wants to commission a portrait of a woman he can't provide, in a dress he can only describe, at an event that never happened. Going out on Radio 4 at 2:30pm on Saturday 16th May.

\*\*\*

PETER FLANNERY wrote the episode of *Inspector George Gently* "Gently in the Blood" going out on BBC1 at 8:30pm on Sunday 17th May.

\*\*\*

LOL FLETCHER wrote the episode of *Doctors* "Sound of Silence" going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Wednesday 20th May.

\*\*\*

JEREMY FRONT wrote the episode of *Murder Unprompted: a Charles Paris Mystery* going out on Radio 4 at 11:30pm on Wednesday 20th May.

\*\*\*

CAROLINE HARRINGTON wrote the episodes of *The Archers* going out on Radio 4 at 7:00pm from Sunday 17th till Friday 22nd May with each episode being repeated at 2:00pm the day following its original broadcast.

\*\*\*

DAWN HARRISON wrote the episode of *Doctors* "A Kind Of Hush" that won Best Single Episode at the British Soap Awards.

\*\*\*

JONATHAN HARVEY wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

LISA HOLDSWORTH wrote the episode of *Waterloo Road* going out on BBC1 at 8:00pm on Wednesday 20th May.

\*\*\*

BILL LYONS wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Friday 22nd May.

\*\*\*

SUE MOONEY wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Tuesday 19th May.

\*\*\*

DAVID NOBBS co-wrote the episode of *Reggie Perrin* going out on BBC1 at 22nd May.

\*\*\*

DEBBIE OATES wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Friday 22nd May.

\*\*\*

JESSE O'MAHONEY wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Tuesday 19th May.

\*\*\*

LYN PAPADOPOULOS wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Wednesday 20th May.

\*\*\*

JAMES PAYNE wrote the episodes of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 7:30pm on Thursday 21st and at 8:00pm on Friday 22nd May.

\*\*\*

ALAN PLATER has a revival of *Confessions of A City Supporter* starting on May 21st at the new Hull Truck Theatre. To find out more and book tickets visit <http://www.hulltruck.co.uk/whats-on/drama?action=view&id=8>

\*\*\*

MARC PYE wrote the episode of *Moving On - Bully* going out on BBC1 at 2:15pm on Tuesday 19th May.

\*\*\*

HEATHER ROBSON wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Friday 22nd May.

\*\*\*

JULIE RUTHERFORD wrote the episode of *Ashes to Ashes* going out on BBC1 at 9:00pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

DANNY STACK wrote the episode of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 7:30pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

SHELAGH STEPHENSON'S dramatisation of JG Farrell's novel *The Siege of Krishnapur* concludes on Radio 4 at 9:00pm on Saturday 16th May (repeated 4pm Sunday 17th).

\*\*\*

DAN TETSELL co-wrote the episode of *Rudy's Rare Records "The Heart of Saturday Night"* going out on Radio 4 at 11:30am on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

CHRIS THOMPSON wrote the episodes of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Wednesday 20th and Thursday 21st May.

\*\*\*

KATHARINE WAY wrote the episode of *Doctors "Out of Control"* going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*

JOHN WILSHER wrote the episode of *New Tricks "Powerhouse"* going out on BBC1 at 9:00pm on Tuesday 19th May.

\*\*\*

ESTHER WILSON wrote the episode of *Moving On - Butterfly Effect* going out on BBC1 at 2:15pm on Friday 22nd May.

\*\*\*

STEVE WOOD'S latest book, *The Angels of Mona Terrace*, was published by Priory Press on 2nd May. Set in Manchester and the Isle of Man in 1971, it's a crossover title aimed at older children and adults.

\*\*\*

KARIN YOUNG wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Monday 18th May.

\*\*\*