

The Writers' Guild Weekly e-bulletin No. 358, Friday 13th February 2009

On the Guild's blog this week at writersguild.blogspot.com:

- [Caryl Churchill's new play free to download](#)
- [Google Book Settlement site live](#)
- [A Monsterist arrives at the National](#)
- [ITV pleas for product placement](#)
- [Oscars nomination for British animators](#)
- [New Kindle raises copyright query](#)
- [New Batwoman scripts](#)
- [Nicholas Hytner interview](#)
- [Teaching Teechers](#)
- [BBC Trust review of BBC children's services](#)
- [ITV drama's quiet revolution](#)
- [BAFTA Film Awards](#)

Guild News

1. Writers' Guild Awards 2009

2. Google Books Settlement - Time to Stake Your Claim

Industry News

3. Save Kids' TV

4. A Night Less Ordinary: free theatre scheme launches

5. Lord Carter's Digital Britain Report

Guild Events

6. Touching A Nerve

Events

7. Member's Play at the Tristan Bates Theatre, London

8. The Story Engine (Darlington)

Courses and Workshops

9. Write The Sitcom, Sell The Sitcom

10. Writing for Radio: Movies in the Mind

11. Writers' Gym I with Ellis Freeman

Opportunities

12. Unproduced Play Scripts Competition

13. Writer Wanted

14. Bridport Prize 2009 Now Open

15. The Script_1 Competition is back!

16. Satyajit Ray Foundation's Short Film Competition

What Members Are Getting Up To

Guild News

1. Writers' Guild Awards 2009

The eligibility period for the Writers' Guild Awards 2009 will be **1 June 2008 - 31 May 2009**, so we would urge members to start thinking about those plays, programmes, films, books and videogames that they'd like to nominate this summer.

It is particularly difficult for our judging panels for Best Play and Best Play for Children and Young People to spot new plays performed in the regions, so we would ask our members across the country to keep their ears to the ground for noteworthy premieres. We don't want to miss any pieces of fantastic new writing, or be too London-centric, so please let us know if you see anything worthy of a Writers' Guild Award in your locality.

A call for nominations will be released in the e-bulletin in June 2009. Be ready!

Many thanks, from the Guild Awards Team.

2. Google Books Settlement - Time to Stake Your Claim

An American court settlement between Google and the US Authors Guild and publishers' organisation could mean that money is waiting for you -- and it is now possible for you to take action.

As reported in the Guild bulletin before Christmas, Google was sued after scanning many thousands of books -- mostly out of print -- in certain US libraries, and making them available on the internet. The outcome of the "class action" case means that the author of each book scanned is being offered at least \$60 (it could be more) and a new agency will be set up to handle future additional payments.

Detailed information about the settlement is available at <http://www.googlebooksettlement.com>. By visiting this website you can register your name and details of your books, and if the settlement proceeds as expected, you will hear in due course whether you will be receiving any payment. The deadline for claims is 5 January 2010 -- it sounds a long way off, but it is better to deal with it now, otherwise you could easily forget about it until it is too late.

Action is more urgent if for any reason you wish to opt out of the settlement -- that has to be done before 5 May 2009.

We think you will find the Google website easy to use, but if you are a member of the Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society (ALCS) -- as most Full Members of the Guild are -- your name and the titles of all books you have registered with ALCS will in any case be checked against the Google database of digitised works. If you are not in ALCS, the Guild has arranged for you to access this process -- simply send an email to google@alcs.co.uk containing your writing name and the title(s) of the book to be checked.

The Writers' Guild of Great Britain -- along with other writers' organisations in the UK -- is interested in discussing with Google a parallel scheme to allow for the scanning of out-of-print books held by British libraries, but we expect to have to wait until the US settlement is confirmed and operational before we can make progress.

Industry News

3. Save Kids' TV

The first month of 2009 has seen a number of reports affecting SKTV's campaign: Ofcom's Final Statement of Recommendations on Public Service Broadcasting; Lord Carter's Digital Britain interim report; the Children's Society's Good Childhood report; and the BBC Trust's Review of the BBC's children's services.

The Save Kids' TV Group, which the Writers' Guild supports, has contributed to each of these reports and in the coming weeks will keep up the pressure, meeting with Culture Secretary Andy Burnham, and Communications Minister Lord Carter, as well as Digital Britain members Robin Foster, Andrew Chitty and Tanya Byron. The group will also be meeting with the BBC Trust, and the Lib Dem spokesman for Culture, Media and Sport, Don Foster MP.

For further information about the group and what they do, see:

<http://www.savekidstv.org.uk/news>

4. A Night Less Ordinary: free theatre scheme launches

Arts Council England (ACE) this week announced the launch of its proposal to offer more than 600,000 free theatre tickets to young people across the country. The Donmar Warehouse was the scene for the high profile ceremony which saw the £2.5 million scheme launched under the title 'A Night Less Ordinary'.

Culture Secretary Andy Burnham described the initiative as “sowing the seeds of something equally significant in the performing arts” as free entry has been for museums and galleries. However, despite its backing by some of the UK's leading creative professionals, the giveaway has been met with hesitation from some industry experts who fear that it may only succeed in generating a culture of free attendance, rather than a habit of theatre-going.

The Arts Council press release can be read [here](#)

For a list of participating venues, click [here](#)

For more information on A Night Less Ordinary, visit the website [here](#)

5. Lord Carter's Digital Britain Report

Bill Thompson writes on the BBC website that the 'Digital Britain' report was insufficiently representative. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/7867285.stm>

An unofficial consultation on the document is taking place at

<http://writetoreply.org/digitalbritain/>.

What did you think of the report? Log on and give your views.

Guild Events

6. Touching A Nerve

Writers' Guild West Midlands Event

Date: Tuesday 24th February 2009

Time: 7pm

Venue: Birmingham Rep Theatre (St Paul's Suite)

Free to Writers' Guild members. £5 non-members/guests (payable on the door)

Please let us know you are coming by emailing Jenny Stephens at:

WMidWritersGuild@aol.com.

Touching A Nerve looks at theatre that tackles controversial community issues.

How is it handled? What is the potential, what are the pitfalls? Does the playwright divide or unite communities by his or her examination of sensitive issues within them?

We will be joined by Janet Steel, artistic director of Kali Theatre Company, who has worked with over 50 new Asian Women writers. In 2004 she directed **Behzti**, a play that provoked violent protests from the Sikh community when it was staged at the Birmingham Rep. The theatre was forced to cancel the play on safety grounds and playwright Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti fled into hiding after receiving death threats.

Now Birmingham Rep is presenting **These Four Streets** (12-28th Feb), a play focussing on the Lozells riots of 2005. One of the writers, Naylah Ahmed, will be discussing the writing and production of this play. Naylah was one of the winners of this year's Bruntwood Playwriting prize at the Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre and is a producer on **Silver Street**, the radio soap opera on the Asian Network.

Using these two experiences as a starting point, we will discuss the role of drama in tackling community issues. How far should community views inform the piece, when does sensitivity become self-censorship, what is the role of theatre in these areas? Is it a matter of freedom of speech or of community rights?

Anyone interested in drama (or other writing) that explores complex community issues should find this a stimulating and possibly provocative evening.

Events

7. Member's Play at the Tristan Bates Theatre, London

Darien Productions in association with English Touring Theatre present 'The Unspeakable' by Dominic Leggett at the Tristan Bates Theatre, Covent Garden, until 14th February, Monday to Saturday at 7.30pm

Starring Suzanna Hamilton (1984, Polanski's Tess, Wetherby, Out of Africa), Jack Klaff (Copenhagen, School of Night, Star Wars,) Daniel Millar (National Theatre's Midsummer Night's Dream) and Jess Murphy (Kneehigh's Brief Encounter, John Doyle's Amadeus), directed by Phil Ormrod, and featuring new music by award-winning young composer Jieun Park, this compelling new play is a powerful exploration of the lies that keep families together, and those that force them apart; and a provocative enquiry into security of our identities. Can we ever escape responsibility for our actions? And just how quickly can we become somebody else?

Tickets £12, £10 concessions.

Friends Offer - All tickets £10 Mon-Thurs. Limited availability. Book now!

Box Office 020 7240 6283 - Quote 'Friends Offer'

8. The Story Engine (Darlington)

26th and 27th February 2009 at the Darlington Arts Centre

The Northern Screenwriters Conference returns for its third year with a new name - The Story Engine - and a simple goal: to help emerging writers gain a better understanding of the art, craft, and business of screenwriting.

The headlining guest this year is Oscar-nominated screenwriter Simon Beaufoy who will be discussing his career from The Full Monty to Slumdog Millionaire. He will be joined by producers,

development executives, film funders and writers from the worlds of TV and film.

The Story Engine offers networking opportunities, case studies, practical workshops, and panel discussions for those who have already embarked on a career as a screenwriter, or just the plain curious.

David Edgar, the President of the Writers' Guild, will also be in attendance and to speak about his career, the activities of the Guild and offer advice to budding writers.

A two-day pass for the conference costs £60 and there are deals on hotels. Check out www.thestoryengine.com or call 01325 486 555 to book.

This event is supported by New Writing North, Northern Film & Media, and Darlington Borough Council.

Courses and Workshops

9. Write The Sitcom, Sell The Sitcom

With Guild member, Dave Cohen

28th February 2009, 9am-6pm at the Craven St Rehearsal Rooms, 10 Craven St London WC2N 5PE

This is a one-day course that concentrates solely on writing sitcom, and finding the right producer to send your script to.

This is a great time to be writing sitcom, after a period in the doldrums the audience show is back in fashion thanks to Graham Linehan's 'IT Crowd' and 'Not Going Out' starring Lee Mack. And after years of neglecting comedy, ITV are back in the hunt for a hit show.

But it's a notoriously difficult form to master, and requires several different skills to be applied simultaneously.

This course begins with the two most important questions – what is your sitcom about (easy enough, it's about a hotel owner who hates his guests), but what is it really about? (not so easy). We'll then start to build the elements that will create the show – character, plot and dialogue, performing practical exercises to show each of these. All the time maintaining a level of believability, and making us laugh. The one thing Dave says he can't teach is the ability to write jokes. You can either do that or you can't. But by the end of the course you should be writing funnier, more focused jokes that fit your own ideas to a greater extent.

Dave Cohen has been writing and performing comedy for a living for 25 years. He has written for dozens of radio and TV shows including 'News Quiz', 'Sunday Format', 'Dead Ringers' and 'Spitting Image'. He is a regular writer on 'Have I Got News For You', and the hit Radio 4 series '15 Minute Musicals'. He is currently writing for the third series of hit BBC1 sitcom 'Not Going Out', has written for 'My Family', and currently has sitcoms in development with BBC1, Radio 4 and Channel 4.

For further details check out

<http://www.raindance.co.uk/site/index.php?id=17,2610,0,0,1,0>

10. Writing for Radio: Movies in the Mind

Saturday 28th March 2009

10.30am to 5pm (registration 10.15am)

This course covers nearly every aspect of writing for radio: comedy gags, sketches and shows; radio sitcoms and series; short drama; full-length drama; radio ads - and beyond, to explore all the possibilities of work in the medium.

The Red Room
Walkabout
136 Shaftesbury Avenue
London W1D 5EZ
(on Cambridge Circus, two minutes walk from Leicester Square tube)

For more details, please contact Paul Bassett on 07884 027171 or by email at paul.bassettdavies@euroscript.co.uk

11. Writers' Gym I with Ellis Freeman

8 session evening course - Starts 16th March 2009

Monday evenings, 6.30pm–8.45pm - £340

The L.F.S. Writers' Gym series aims to stimulate ideas through being playful. Over eight sessions, each course is designed to seek ways to unblock, gain writing habits, develop those ideas and find your voice.

In Writers' Gym I each class consists of a mixture of exercises, games and explanations on different aspects of screenwriting. These exercises aim to seed new ideas and also open participants' minds to new ways of thinking. [Click here for more info.](#)

Deadline for applications: Friday 27th February 2009

Opportunities

12. Unproduced Play Scripts Competition

Hydrae are now accepting new unproduced scripts for a competition. There will be two categories of play; from five to fifteen minutes, and from fifteen to thirty minutes. The winning play in the short category to receive a prize of £50 and the longer £75. Plus the promise that the best two in each category will be performed to a theatre audience.

If you wish to submit a play, please follow the Manuscript Format Requirements below.

Hydrae will accept one play per category per author. Please send one hard copy of each script per character, plus one for the director. Monologues will not be considered for the first show, possibly for the next.

Any scripts that are not selected for performance will be returned, providing you enclose an SAE. Please send scripts to the following address:

S. Tyrrell - Artistic Director,

Hydrae. 3 Bar View Terrace,

Higher Trannack,

Helston,

Cornwall,

TR13 0DQ.

The closing date for entries the end of February 2009. Late entries cannot be guaranteed to be considered for this production but will certainly be considered for the next.

Contact email address: hydratic@gmail.com

13. Writer Wanted

Experienced writer required to adapt true life story from diary form. The writer will have to work closely with the client and all necessary material will be made available from early life, to marriages and prison. The writer must have publishing contacts. Terms negotiable. If you are interested, please write to pjmorgan1946@talktalk.net

14. Bridport Prize 2009 Now Open

The Bridport Prize 2009 International Creative Writing Competition for Short Stories and Poems is now open for entries!

The Bridport Prize is the richest open writing competition in the English language - with £5,000 first prize for a short story (of up to 5000 words); and £5,000 first prize for a poem (of up to 42 lines).

The Bridport is also known as a tremendous literary stepping stone - the first step in the careers of writers such as: Kate Atkinson, Tobias Hill, Carol Ann Duffy and Helen Dunmore.

Anyone can enter - so long as the work is previously unpublished. It costs £7 per story or £6 per poem and the closing date is 30th June 2009.

Each year the prize is judged by well known writers - this year we are delighted to have Ali Smith judging short stories and Jackie Kay judging poetry.

Enter online or download an entry form www.bridportprize.org.uk

If you prefer to receive an entry form by email, please email frances@bridportprize.org.uk

Or send an SAE for an entry form to be posted to you

The Bridport Prize

PO Box 6910

Dorset

DT6 9BQ

UK

15. The Script_1 Competition is back!

Each year the Cheltenham Screenwriters' Festival launches it's 'Script_1' writing competition for South West based writers and this year is no different, but instead of giving you free rein, the competition entries are to be based on one of three themes...

'The Olympics 2012'
'A West Country Love Story'
'Reality Television'

The title can be yours but it must be about or contain elements of these three themes. If you'd like to enter, just send in your idea for a 10-minute film and, if it is accepted, you will be invited to attend a FREE workshop in Cheltenham where you will be shown how to turn it into a TV or film script. Following the workshop the best three scripts will win cash prizes of £300, £100 and £50 each. The prizes will be presented at the International Screenwriters' Festival in October 2009.

Deadline for entries: 5pm on 27th February 2009. Workshops will be in March and April.

Send entries either by email to cathi@screenwritersfestival.com, or by post to Screenwriters' Festival, Unit 24c, Daniels Ind. Estate, Bath Road , Stroud , GL5 3TJ .

For further information on how to apply and competition rules please go to the Festival website, www.screenwritersfestival.com

16. Satyajit Ray Foundation's Short Film Competition

This Competition is open to all film-makers either resident or studying in the UK. **The closing date**, after which no entries can be considered, is **1 March 2009**.

Film Content: The film, of no more than 30 minutes running time, should express and inform aspects of the experiences of South Asians (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) either within their own countries or the Diaspora.

All submissions must have been completed within two years prior to the closing date. Previous entries are ineligible.

Format: Whilst the films may be shot on any standard format (film, digital or video), entries for consideration should be submitted in VHS or DVD formats.

These entries, for consideration by the jury, should be forwarded to:

Julian Pye, British Council
10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN
email: julian.pye@britishcouncil.org

Award: The Satyajit Ray Foundation is pleased to announce that it will be presenting a cash prize for Best Film of £1,000. Please see www.satyajitray.org.uk for more information.

Presentation of Award: Extracts from a representative selection of entries will be screened at the Award Ceremony to be held in the David Lean Room of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), Piccadilly, London, W1, on the afternoon of Sunday 26 April 2009, after which the winner will be announced and the winning film shown in its entirety. Selected entrants plus one guest will be invited. Film director Mike Leigh is Patron of the short film award.

What Members Are Getting Up To

A correction from last weeks E-bulletin, MARTIN ALLEN did not write the episode of *Half Moon Investigations* that went out on BBC1 at 4:35pm on Monday 9th February.

ABBY AJAYI wrote the episode of *Doctors "Amends"* going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Wednesday 18th February.

DAVID ASHTON'S radio play *McLevy* concludes with the fourth episode "*The Reckoning*" going out on Radio 4 at 2:15pm on Tuesday 17th February.

RAY BROOKING wrote the episode of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 8:00pm on Monday 16th February.

RICHARD BURKE wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Thursday 19th February.

ANNA CLEMENTS wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Tuesday 17th February.

SIMON CROWTHER wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 8:30pm on Friday 20th February.

CLIVE DAWSON wrote the episode of *The Bill "Broken Hearts"* going out on ITV1 at 8:00pm on Thursday 19th February.

MATTHEW EVANS wrote the episode of *Wild at Heart* going out on ITV1 at 8:30pm on Sunday 15th February. He also wrote the episode of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 7:30pm on Thursday 19th February.

DONNA FRANCESCHILD'S radio play *The Lottery Ticket* is going out on Radio 4 at 2:15pm on Wednesday 18th February.

JEREMY FRONT has dramatised Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop* in two one hour episodes as a BBC Radio 4 Classic Serial. It will be broadcast on Sunday 15th and Sunday 22nd February at 3.00pm.

JAYNE HOLLINSON wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Monday 16th February.

JULIE JONES wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 8:30pm on Monday 16th February.

PETER KERRY wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Wednesday 18th February.

DAVID LANE wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Wednesday 18th February.

BILL LYONS wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Friday 20th February.

JONATHAN MYERSON'S radio play *The Invasion: Arab Chronicles of the First Crusade* is going out on Radio 4 at 9:00pm on Saturday 14th February.

JESSE O'MAHONEY wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Wednesday 18th February.

JULIE PARSONS wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Monday 16th February.

RHIANNA PRATCHETT has been interviewed on www.newsarama.com about her work on *Mirro'rs Edge*. To read the interview, please visit <http://www.newsarama.com/games/090107-mirrors-edge-Rhianna-Pratchett.html>.

HEATHER ROBSON wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Friday 20th February.

PAUL ROUNDELL wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Thursday 19th February.

SUZIE SMITH wrote the episode of *Casualty "Stand By Me"* going out on BBC1 at 8:25pm on Saturday 14th February.

JOHN SULLIVAN wrote the episode of *The Green Green Grass* "I Done It My Way" going out on BC1 at 8:30pm on Thursday 19th February.

NICK WARBURTON wrote the episode of *Holby City* "Truth and Mercy" going out on BBC1 at 8:00pm on Tuesday 17th February.

PETER WHALLEY wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Friday 20th February.

JOHN WILSHER wrote the episode of *New Tricks* "Ducking and Diving" going out on BBC1 at 9:00pm on Thursday 19th February.

STEPHEN WYATT wrote the episode of *The Yellowplush Papers* "Captain Rook" going out on Radio 4 at 11:30am on Monday 16th February.

PHILIP QIZILBASH wrote next weeks episodes on the BBC Asian Network's daily soup, *Silver Street*. It is broadcast Monday 16th till Friday 20th February at 1:30pm, with an omnibus edition on Sunday 22nd February at 4:30pm.

Writers' Guild of Great Britain, 40 Rosebery Avenue, EC1R 4RX; erik@writersguild.org.uk; www.writersguild.org.uk; tel +44 (0) 20 7833 0777; fax +44 (0) 20 7833 4777. This email bulletin is a service to members and associates of the Writers' Guild of Great Britain. Comments, suggestions and requests to be removed from the distribution list should be sent to erik@writersguild.org.uk. Items are included from a variety of sources. The Guild does its best to check everything and make corrections when necessary but we will not accept responsibility for mistakes and omissions. You are advised to check terms and conditions before entering any commitments. Copyright Writers' Guild of Great Britain and suppliers of items 2008.
