

# The Writers' Guild Weekly e-bulletin No. 363, Friday 20th March 2009

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

- [Breaking the screenwriting rules](#)
- [Cussler's \\$14 million legal bill](#)
- [Watchmen screenwriters Q&A](#)
- [Free books on Sony Reader](#)
- [The difficult second novel](#)
- [Guild concern over BBC's rejection of Churchill play](#)
- [Millard Kaufman dies](#)
- [Minghella Movie Marathon](#)
- [Guillermo Arriaga interview](#)
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## **Guild News**

### **1. TV Good Practice Guide**

The Guild's Television Committee is just a few days away from finalising its new Good Practice Guild for television, entitled 'Working with Writers'. The Guide is aimed at producers, directors, script editors and other production personnel working with writers and also advises writers on their rights and responsibilities.

Many thanks to the Television Committee members who've been working on this document and to Guild member Tony Read, whose original document this Guide was based on.

We hope to have this resource printed and up on our website within the next month or so. Watch this space!

### **2. Cult Cymru - Calling Wales-Based Guild Members**

CULT Cymru is a joint project between the five unions from the cultural and creative industries in Wales (BECTU, Equity, the MU, the NUJ and the Writers Guild of Great Britain) funded by the Welsh Assembly Government's Wales Union Learning Fund. The aim of the project is to enhance learning opportunities for freelance workers in the industry.

If you would like to be kept up to date on training and professional development opportunities for freelancers in Wales, please send your name and preferred e-mail address to the Guild's Union Learning Rep. in Wales, Othniel Smith ([othnielsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:othnielsmith@yahoo.com)).

### **3. Hampstead Theatre Offers Discount for Guild Members**

Members of the Writers' Guild are eligible for **half price** tickets on **preview performances**. Book tickets by calling the Box Office on 020 7722 9301, and quote 'Writers Guild'. Members must present their membership card when collecting tickets.

The next production is a revival of the Michael Frayn classic ALPHABETICAL ORDER, previewing from Thursday 16th April. Tickets, normally £15, will be available at £7.50

Info at <http://www.hampsteadtheatre.com/writing>

## **Industry News**

### **4. Andy Burnham Maintains Ban on Product Placement**

After consultation with various industry bodies, including the Writers' Guild, Culture Secretary Andy Burnham has announced that the Government will maintain the ban on product placement on television.

For the full story, see

[http://www.writersguild.org.uk/public/003\\_WritersGuil/310\\_WGGBNewsPro.html](http://www.writersguild.org.uk/public/003_WritersGuil/310_WGGBNewsPro.html)

## 5. News from The Red Room Theatre Company

After a highly-productive and pleasant stay at Oval House Theatre, The Red Room is relocating to Covent Garden. **From 1st April 2009**, the new address will be;

11-15 Betterton Street,  
Covent Garden,  
London,  
WC2H 9BP.  
Tel: 0207 470 8790

Secondly, May will see The Red Room hold it's fifth platform, this time on the subject of feminism.

And lastly, their new website will be going live soon. Please check it out for details of the platform and other events and opportunities. [www.theredroom.org.uk](http://www.theredroom.org.uk)

## Events

### 6. Abraham's Point Screening and Masterclass in Cardiff

**Friday 20th March 6.30-9.00pm Atrium Cinema, Cardiff** – Screening of Abraham's Point followed by networking drinks

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 9.30-4pm Atrium Cinema, Cardiff** – All day masterclass focusing on the challenges of making a feature from pre to post production with the following speakers:

Actor – [Joseph Millson](#) (Quantum of Solace, S.N.U.B, The Sarah Jane Adventures)

Writer/Director – [Wyndham Price](#)

Line Producer – [David Ball](#)

Production Designer – [Keith Maxwell](#)

Editor – [John Gillanders](#)

DoP – [Zoran Velkovic](#)

Composer – [John Hardy](#)

**FREE** event, including drinks reception and lunch

The masterclass will be split into 3 sessions

To attend this event you need to book, so please RSVP to [sharon@screenacademywales.org](mailto:sharon@screenacademywales.org)

Further information on [www.screenacademywales.org](http://www.screenacademywales.org)

Further information on [www.abrahamspoint.com](http://www.abrahamspoint.com)

## **7. Comedy Event at The Green Man, London**

THE British Society of Comedy Writers is holding a one-day comedy event at The Green Man, 383 Euston Road, London, (next to Great Portland Street underground station) on Saturday 4th April from 11am to 11pm.

Several companies are attending this event looking to meet writers, artists and performers for current and future projects

For further details and booking form contact: [ken@bscw.co.uk](mailto:ken@bscw.co.uk).

## **8. Swimming Naked**

First Charles Ponzi, then Bernie Madoff and now - Saul Stone. *SWIMMING NAKED!* by Alice Josephs, directed by Catherine Arden. A farce for our financial times with Catherine Potter, Maggie Robson and Mark Shaer. Inspired by Warren Buffett's aphorism, 'It's only when the tide goes out that you learn who's been swimming naked' 8 pm on Tuesday, March 31 – Saturday, April 4 2009, Barons Court Theatre, Curtain's Up Pub, 28a Comeragh Road, London W14 9AR. Invest in a ticket for only £5! Box Office 020 8932 4747.

Part of the *Three Plays Singular New Writing Festival*.

Facebook <http://tinyurl.com/bdnhvb> Twitter <http://twitter.com/SwimmingNaked>

## **9. Media Meltdown or Technological Treasure?**

First we heard about digital media convergence, the digital dividend and the Information Society - aka The Information Age.

Then it was file sharing, user generated content, 'mashups', policing the Internet, data retention and personal privacy. Somewhere along the line we have learned to love digital broadcasting and metadata, we have implemented TPMs, and read the Gower Review on orphan works, fair dealing and other rights issues.

Now we have Carter's interim report on 'Digital Britain' to digest, with further commercial, legal and technical proposals.

How does all this affect us, who are just minding our own business, in our daily media-industry lives? Where are we actually, in reality? What do we need to plan for realistically?

**Speaker: HUBERT BEST**, Media Industry and Copyright Lawyer

### **VENUE:**

The London Television Centre, Upper Ground, South Bank, London SE1 9LT  
Nearest Underground and Train Station – Waterloo

Refreshments, tea and coffee will be available

Please Register for a place to attend:

**DATE:** 25th MARCH – WEDNESDAY

**TIME:** 19.00pm

**COST:** FREE

Please e-mail your intention to attend to [LondonCentreEvents@rts.org.uk](mailto:LondonCentreEvents@rts.org.uk)

## Courses and Workshops

### 10. Dave Cohen's Sketch Course

On Saturday 4th April writer and comedian Dave Cohen will be running a workshop offering advice on how to improve your chances of getting sketches onto BBC Radio's new topical comedy show '7 on 7'.

The show begins in May and will run for ten weeks, and there'll be another series probably later in the year, so there will be plenty of opportunities for your sketches to be broadcast.

Dave is one of the best-known topical comedy writers in the country. He has written for 'News Quiz', 'Dead Ringers', 'Spitting Image' and 'Mock The Week' and has been a regular writer on 'Have I Got News For You' since 2001.

The course will look at what makes a good sketch, you get to write and perform some sketches of your own, and discuss other ways of breaking in to the BBC. And there'll be pages of helpful notes for you to take home after the course.

The course costs £60 plus VAT (£69) and runs from 10am to 4pm at the London Canal Museum (5 mins walk from King's Cross station). PLACES ARE STRICTLY LIMITED, so if you're interested you'll need to contact Dave at [bindmancohen@hotmail.com](mailto:bindmancohen@hotmail.com)

Dave has written a couple of articles on this site about sketch writing which you can read at

[http://www.sitcom.co.uk/writers/writing\\_sketches.shtml](http://www.sitcom.co.uk/writers/writing_sketches.shtml)

and

[http://www.sitcom.co.uk/writers/write\\_for\\_tilt.shtml](http://www.sitcom.co.uk/writers/write_for_tilt.shtml)

## **11. Love Story Day**

Robert McKee will be bringing his brand new class **LOVE STORY DAY** to London on **Thursday 16th April 2009**. The class covers all aspects of the love story - both dramatic stories and romantic comedies - and is ideal for screenwriters, filmmakers and just about anyone who loves a great love story.

### **When:**

16th April 2009 (Thursday)

### **Where:**

Cayley Theatre

University of Westminster  
35 Marylebone Road  
London NW1 5LS

### **Fee:**

£135 + VAT

### **To Register:**

### **Online:**

[Click for McKee's Website](#)

or phone: +44 (0)870 080 1833

## **12. Introduction to Script Development**

Saturday 4th April, Saturday 18th April 09 // 10am - 5pm

Venue: Lighthouse, 28 Kensington Street, Brighton BN1 4AJ

Tutor: Julie Everton

Cost: £130 (full) £100 (concessions)

This course is designed for people who are interested in starting or building their careers as script readers or script developers. It is also suitable for writers, producers or directors interested in learning how to best work with a script to maximise its inherent potential.

[http://www.lighthouse.org.uk/opportunity/script\\_development.htm](http://www.lighthouse.org.uk/opportunity/script_development.htm)

## Opportunities

### 13. The Edinburgh Pitch 2009

**Deadline:** May 11th 2009

**Organisation:** Scottish Documentary Institute

**Seeking:** This is a fantastic opportunity for all filmmakers looking to produce a feature length documentary to attend a pitching and development workshop and to pitch formally in front of a carefully selected panel of International and UK commissioning editors, sales agents and producers.

Last year, the three day workshop covered a pitching practice day, the pitch itself, followed by one to one meetings with each member of the panel. We had representatives from BBC Storyville, Channel 4, Britdoc Foundation, First Hand Film Sales, ZDF, Arte France, Lichtpunt, Belgium, Scottish Screen.

Already confirmed for 2009: Wim Van Rompaay, Lichtpunt, Belgium; Doris Hepp, Arte, ZDF; Ian Davies, Initialize Films; Scottish Screen, Esther Van Messel, First Hand Films, (Sales and Distribution).

Please download information on how to apply with a project or as an observer from: <http://www.docscene.org/apply> or contact Rebecca Day on 0131 221 6125

### 14. Face Front Inclusive Searching for New Play

Face Front Inclusive Theatre is looking for a play with a small cast ( anything up to 4 characters) for 2010 performances at The Millfield Theatre North London and possible short tour.

The play will be performed by disabled and non disabled actors although they are not necessarily looking for the play to reflect this. They are open to receiving all style of plays.

Please submit your work no later than March 30th to

Catrin Thomas / Jon French

Face Front Inclusive Theatre,

Upper Level, 52 Market Square,

Edmonton Green Shopping Centre,

Edmonton Green,

London N2 9NX

### **15. Anderida Writers Circle Looking for Speakers**

A writers circle based in Eastbourne are looking for Guild members to come and speak to the group about their career and how they went about becoming a professional writer.

They will be publicising the meeting beforehand with reading groups, library and local newspapers. This would be an ideal opportunity for an up and coming writer to publicise their work. For more information regarding expenses etc. please contact:

Harry and Pam Pope,

Flat 10, 6 Queens Gardens, Eastbourne

East Sussex, BN21 3EF

07910 697401 or 01323 734107

## **16. The Veni Vidi Theatre Company Playwright Competition**

The Veni Vidi Theatre Company is launching a new competition for playwrights with brave, imaginative and daring stories to tell.

This competition is free to enter and is for all ages and abilities.

They are looking for 3 One Act Plays that engage and audience and raise debate on our current social issues but they must be based around the image that they have set (Please go to the website to see stimulus for the competition and to see the competition guidelines) [www.venividitheatre.com](http://www.venividitheatre.com)

Selected winners will have their play produced in September 2009 at a venue on the London Fringe Scene starring a professional cast of actors.

Submission Guidelines:

- Plays must be written using the image as inspiration
- Plays must be 25-35 minutes running time
- Plays must draw on our current social and cultural issues

All submissions must be in by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009

For more information please go to the website or e-mail [natalie@venividitheatre.com](mailto:natalie@venividitheatre.com) or [heman@venividitheatre.com](mailto:heman@venividitheatre.com)

## **17. Call For Five-Minute Play Submissions**

5 minutes.

It's not a long time, is it?

What can really happen in just 5 minutes?

What would you make happen?

Eyebrow Productions is asking writers what they think can happen in 5 minutes. From the fantastical to the mundane, whether you're waiting at a bus stop or witnessing the apocalypse, Eyebrow is inviting writers to submit their 5-minute plays for an exciting evening of new writing.

The event, WriteBites, is encouraging writers from all backgrounds and experience to submit material. Twelve plays, to be performed by an ensemble of actors, will be selected for the first event to take place at a London venue, (to be announced), followed by a WriteBites launch party.

The deadline for submissions is Thursday 30 April.

Scripts should be typed on single-side A4, and approximately five pages long.

Please send submissions to:

WriteBites

Eyebrow Productions

13 Charterhouse Square

London, EC1M 6AX

Any scripts received after this date will not be considered for the first WriteBites event, to take place in May, but will be considered for the next WriteBites night, set to be a regular event on the London theatre scene.

For more information about Eyebrow Productions, please visit the WriteBites website:

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

## What Members Are Getting Up To

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NAZRIN CHOUDHURY wrote the episode of *Waterloo Road* going out on BBC1 at 8:00pm on Wednesday 25th March.

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STEPHEN CHURCHETT wrote the first episode of the new series of *Lewis* "Allegory" going out on ITV1 at 9:00pm on Sunday 22nd March.

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ANNA CLEMENTS wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Tuesday 24th March.

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SIMON CROWTHER wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 8:30pm on Monday 23rd March.

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CHRIS FEWTRELL wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Monday 23rd March.

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JOHN FINNEMORE wrote the episode of *Cabin Pressure "Edinburgh"* going out on

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ALISON FISHER wrote the episode of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 8:00pm on Monday 23rd March.

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JONATHAN R. HALL wrote the episode of *Doctors "The Right Time"* going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Friday 27th March.

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MARK ILLIS wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Wednesday 25th March.

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PETER KERRY wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Tuesday 24th March.

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KAREN LAWS wrote the episode of *Doctors "Keep It in the Family"* going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Wednesday 25th March.

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PENNY LEICESTER wrote the episode of *This Book Will Save Your Life* going out on Radio 4 at 7:45pm on Monday 23rd March.

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JONATHAN RICH wrote the episode of *The Bill "On the Money"* going out on ITV1 at 8:00pm on Wednesday 25th March.

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PAUL ROUNDELL wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Thursday 26th March.

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DAVID STAFFORD co-wrote the episode of *Hazelbeach* going out on Radio 4 at 11:30pm on Monday 23rd March.

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JACK THORNE has been commissioned by Channel 4 to create a new mockumentary about six disabled characters spending a *Shipwrecked* -style year on a desert island. The six one-hour episodes of *Cast Offs* will feature actors with conditions including blindness, deafness, dwarfism and cherubism. Their stories will unfold through *Lost*-style flashbacks. The series will be filmed in Nottingham and Norfolk by Eleven Film. Alison Walsh, Channel 4's disability editorial manager said in *Broadcast* magazine this week, "*Cast Offs* will take a swipe at the way disabled people are treated in reality shows. We wanted to show more subtly that disability doesn't have to shape your character or relationships."

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NICK WARBURTON'S radio play series *Witness: Five Plays from the Gospel of Luke*, the first episode of which is going out on Radio 4 at 2:15pm on Tuesday 24th March.

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ANDREW S. WALSH wrote a chapter on Writing for platform games in *Writing for Video Game Genres : From FPS to RPG*. This third book is the latest in IGDA's guides to writing for video games written by full time video game writers. Published by A K Peters Ltd, it is available from Amazon and all good bookshops now.

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PETER WHALLEY wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Friday 27th March.

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COLIN WYATT wrote the episode of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 7:30pm on Thursday 26th March.

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STEPHEN WYATT'S radio play *The Boy Who Followed Ripley* is going out on Radio 4 as part of *The Complete Ripley* series at 2:30pm on Saturday 21st March.