

# The Writers' Guild Weekly e-bulletin No. 399, Friday 27th November 2009

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- [Three paths to self-publishing](#)
- [Simon Nelson, BBC Multiplatform](#)
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- [Dustbin Baby wins International Emmy](#)
- [Agents and publishers could face licensing bills](#)
- [Jack Thorne - Cast Offs](#)
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### **The BBC's cheque is in the past**

The Writers' Guild has been informed by the BBC that Aunty will be phasing out payment by cheque by the end of June 2010. After that payment for all contributors will be by BACS transfer direct into your bank account. This will apply to all BBC staff, freelancers, suppliers, artists and contributors.

According to the BBC, returned cheques far outnumber failed BACS payments. This is inefficient as returned cheques are operationally costly, requiring manual processing that often results in queries and leads to delays. BACS is said to be cheaper, faster, more secure, more reliable, and consistent with the BBC's e-agenda. A spokesperson said: "Cheques are becoming obsolete and are being phased out of the UK economy. Many large companies have now stopped accepting payment by cheque."

It is possible there may be a very small number of exceptions. If the changes will cause you problems please contact the Guild – we may be able to intervene on your behalf.

## **Writers' Guild attacks axing of "Asian Archers"**

The threatened axing of the BBC Asian Network soap opera Silver Street would lead to a significant reduction in opportunities for writers and actors in the West Midlands and beyond, says the Writers' Guild of Great Britain.

The ending of the programme next March would also further undermine radio drama production in Birmingham. Launched in 2004 as a 10-minute-a-day radio soap set in a diverse community in a fictional West Midlands city, the "Asian Archers" was cut from 10 to 8 minutes in 2008, and from eight to five earlier this year. Having axed Silver Street, the BBC proposes substituting ten 30-minute plays per year – fewer than one a month – representing a cut from over 21 hours a year to five hours of drama on the Asian Network.

Past writers for Silver Street include Sonali Bhattacharyya (now writing for EastEnders, Doctors, Casualty and Holby City) and Tanika Gupta (whose stage plays include Gladiator Games for Theatre Royal, Stratford East, and Sugar Mummies for the Royal Court, London). The ten writers currently working for the soap include Amber Lone and Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti, both of whom have had work presented by the Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Writers' Guild President David Edgar, who is a member of the Guild's West Midlands Branch, commented: "The axing of Silver Street would represent a significant loss of opportunity for talented writers from many backgrounds – as well as actors and producers – in the West Midlands.

The decision represents a further threat to radio production in Birmingham, which has already suffered from the loss of one of its two dedicated drama producers. Birmingham's state-of-the-art radio studio is great for the Archers, but it should also create work which reflects the wide diversity of the region. New half-hour drama from the Asian Network is a highly welcome idea, but it should be in addition to rather than instead of Silver Street." The BBC should retain its commitment to drama which reflects the diverse communities it serves, says the Guild, as well as maintaining drama production across all regions.

## Events

### **BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum**

Gillies MacKinnon, the highly acclaimed director of Hideous Kinky, Pure, Tara Road and The Playboys will co-chair the BAFTA Rocliffe New Writing Forum. This is the ideal networking event for writers as incorporates development work-shopping of early drafts of scripts and an informal networking session with actors, directors, writers and industry guests. For tickets (5UKP) please log on to [www.bafta.org/whats-on](http://www.bafta.org/whats-on) and click on 30 November on the calendar. Event starts at 7.30pm.

## **From Script to Screen – Understanding The Market**

Thursday 3rd December

6.30pm: Doors open

7.00pm: Event start

@ Lighthouse, 28 Kensington St, Brighton BN1 4AJ

Entry: FREE

Are you a writer, producer or director with a film project you want to get off the ground?

Lighthouse presents an exclusive opportunity to hear industry experts give their best insights on how to negotiate the balance between the creative aspects and business considerations of filmmaking. Hear their thoughts on what's hot and what's not, ways to up the pulling power of your project, the F word... finance – where to find it and how to access it, approaching sales agents and distributors, the best routes to market and a road map to get you there, the do's and don'ts of schmoozing and top tips on how to increase your chances of success in a high risk industry.

Chaired by David Castro of Screen South, confirmed guests so far are:

**Dan MacRae** (Head of Development, Optimum Releasing)

Now at Optimum Releasing, Dan was previously a Development Executive at Working Title Films and prior to that, was deputy Head of the Development Fund at the UK Film Council. In the distant past he worked across a range of activities in Scotland from repertory cinema programming to running a host of screenwriter and producer training events.

**Nicky Bentham** (Producer, TAKING LIBERTIES, MOON)

Nicky Bentham (formerly Moss) is an accomplished Producer with success in feature films, documentary and commercials. Most recently Nicky co-produced MOON, a sci-fi thriller starring Sam Rockwell and Kevin Spacey. It premiered at Sundance in January 2009, has since been released internationally by Sony and enjoyed critical and commercial success. Prior to that Nicky produced the BAFTA nominated feature documentary TAKING LIBERTIES, which examined the erosion of liberties under the guise of the war on terror.

For more information about the event and panellists please visit:

<http://www.lighthouse.org.uk/whatson/scripttoscreen.htm>

This event has been enabled by Screen South and the RIFE lottery funding programme.

## **Royal Television Society Christmas lecture -Greg Dyke speaks**

**LONDON CENTRE**

**9th December - Wednesday - 7:00 pm**

**'RTS London centre at ITV'**

***Cavendish Conference Centre, 22 Duchess Mews, London W1G 9DT***

Greg Dyke, former BBC director general, will give us his views on the current broadcasting landscape. That, as we all know, is in constant flux with Digital Britain and OFCOM's PSB review in play, and the BBC under constant attack from different directions - the most recent from James Murdoch, chairman of News Corp in Europe, who compared the BBC News operation to an Orwellian propaganda ministry.

Greg we're sure will cover this amongst many other issues, in what is likely to be a lively and thought provoking evening.

Greg Dyke began his television career in current affairs at LWT, becoming editor in chief of TVam, director of programmes at TVS and LWT, then chief executive of LWT, chairman and CEO of Pearson TV and from 2000 to 2004 director general of the BBC. He is currently chairman of the BFI (British Film Institute).

**Date: WEDNESDAY - 9th December 2009**

**Time: 6.30 for 7pm**

**ADMISSION FREE**

Drinks will be available before and after the talk.

**Please register at E-mail: [LondonCentreEvents@rts.org.uk](mailto:LondonCentreEvents@rts.org.uk)**

**Courses and Workshops**

## **Weekend workshop for dramatic writers**

**Want to improve your dramatic writing? *Away With Words* is an inspiring weekend workshop which explores the techniques of scriptwriting and encourages you to ‘find your voice’ as a writer.**

Held in Nottingham, the two-day course enables new and emerging writers to turn their ideas into script form. In a professional yet friendly environment, playwright Amanda Whittington and director Esther Richardson will lead sessions on creating strong characters, developing plot and identifying the story only you can tell.

Suitable for beginners and experienced writers, *Away with Words* explores the elements of writing drama through exercises, discussion and one-to-one mentoring. It will also give valuable insight on making your way in the writing business.

“Our focus is on writing for the stage but the course will cover techniques you can also use for radio and television drama,” says Esther, the former Artistic Director of Theatre Writing Partnership, who has a well-established track record in working with new writers. “Practical exercises will also inspire anyone interested in the creative writing process”.

The weekend workshop will be held the stylish setting of Nottingham’s Harts Hotel on February 28-29th, 2010 (10am - 4pm). The cost is £175, including a buffet lunch each day and refreshments. Harts is also offering an excellent accommodation rate for guests who wish to stay overnight.

More information and details of booking can be found at:

<http://www.weekendsawaywithwords.com>

## **Opportunities**

### **Theatre trail writers competition 2010**

Writers are invited to submit plays for next year’s Trail.

Plays should be about 30 minutes long, suitable for day-time performance, with practicable casting and props. All entries should be submitted to

Drip Action Theatre Trail 2010

1 Norfolk House

28 High Street

Arundel

West Sussex

BN18 9AB

Entries must be received by 31st December 2009. There is no reading fee.

One play only per entrant, in hard copy (not e-mail). Please enclose SAE if you'd like your play returned.

The reading committee will select the plays that will be performed, with the best submitted play receiving the Joy Goun award of £200 at our Theatre Trail launch in May 2010.

Each successful playwright will receive a £150 writer's fee.

For further information call 01903 885250 or email [dripactioninfo@btinternet.com](mailto:dripactioninfo@btinternet.com)

### **New Playwright Awards**

Deadline: 15th December 2009

£1,500 bursary and mentoring available for new Scottish playwrights

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/opportunity/new\\_playwright\\_awards.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/opportunity/new_playwright_awards.shtml)

### **Munich International - call for entries 2010**

Munich International is pleased to announce the call for entries for next year's short film festival which will take place from June 17th through 23rd of 2010. The festival

will showcase the world's best contemporary short films at the historical Gloria Filmpalast in the heart of the Bavarian capitol.

Submissions are open to non-German language films of all genres (fiction, animation, documentary, experimental, etc.) from any nation of the world. Films must not have been shown in Bavaria at a festival, in a theatre or on Bavarian television before, and must not exceed a length of 15 minutes. All non-English films must have English subtitles. The festival only screens 35mm prints and progressive HD data files. The deadline for submissions is February 28, 2010, but we kindly ask that you send your film in as soon as possible rather than waiting until the deadline. Please check the complete submission requirements at <http://www.muc-intl.de>

To submit a film, please register at [reelport.com](http://reelport.com) – after registering, you will be guided through the necessary steps, from the entry of simple data requests to the automatic upload of a video file. You may also send a DVD preview copy to the address mentioned on the reelport website. Please do not send your preview copy directly to the festival.

Please feel free to share this information with anyone who may wish to submit a film. Thanks in advance for your interest and collaboration.

## What Members Are Getting Up To

MARTIN ALLEN wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 8:00pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

MARK BURT wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on IT1 at 8:00pm on Thursday 3rd Dceember.

PAUL COATES wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Tuesday 1st December.

TIM DYNEVOR wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Thursday 3rd December.

CHRIS FEWTRELL wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:30pm on Friday 4th December.

BARRY GROSSMAN'S *The Attractive Young Rabbi* is currently in the midst of a repeat run on BBC Radio 7 on Thursdays at 9:00am and 5:00pm.

DAWN HARRISON wrote the episode of *Doctors* "Harry - Architect of Fortune" going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Friday 4th December.

JONATHAN HARVEY'S series *Beautiful People* continues with the episode "How I Got My Camp" going out on BBC2 at 10:00pm on Friday 4th December.

LOUISE IRONSIDE wrote the episode of *Waterloo Road* going out on BBC1 at 8:00pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

ROB JOHNSTON'S new play *Under My Skin* is being produced at The Nexus Art Cafe, Manchester ([www.nexusartcafe.com](http://www.nexusartcafe.com)) at 8pm on 3rd-5th December.

JULIE JONES wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Monday 30th November.

JOHN KERR wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 at 8:00pm on Tuesday 1st December.

JANE MARLOW wrote the episode of *Hollyoaks* going out on C4 at 6:30pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

RICHARD MCBRIEN wrote the episode of *Spooks* going out on BBC1 at 9:00pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

NATALIE MCGRATH'S pant-o *Vixens in the Wood* will be performed by an all female cast at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern between December 10th and 19th for Lustre and Bluster Productions as part of a new writing initiative. For further information and booking follow this link: [www.rvt.org.uk/event/vixens-wood](http://www.rvt.org.uk/event/vixens-wood)

LIZZIE MICKERY wrote the episode of *Paradox* going out on BBC1 at 9:00pm on Tuesday 1st December.

ROLAND MOORE wrote the episode of *Waybuloo* being shown on CBeebies at 11.30am on Friday 27th November. Is a stick really capable of being magic?

JONATHAN MYERSON'S political radio drama series *Number Ten* continues on Radio 4 with the episode "*A Failed State*" going out at 2:15pm on Friday 4th December.

JANE PEARSON wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Tuesday 1st December.

CHRIS THOMPSON wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

MATTHEW WAKEFIELD wrote the episode of *Doctors* "*Food, Love and Money*" going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

JOY WILKINSON wrote the episode of *Doctors* "*Pictures of You*" going out on BBC1 at 1:45pm on Thursday 3rd December.

COLIN WYATT wrote the episodes of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 at 7:30pm on Thursday 3rd and at 8:00pm on Friday 4th December.

KARIN YOUNG wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 at 7:00pm on Friday 4th December.

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