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[WGGB response to product placement consultation](#)

In an ideal world, the Writers' Guild of Great Britain would retain the ban on product placement (PP). However, the Guild recognises that income from traditional advertising revenue and programme sponsorship is in a state of flux. Scripted drama and comedy is being squeezed from the schedules by reality television formats, including shows like the X Factor, which is in practice an advertorial for artists on a particular record label. Viewers are already exposed to PP in shows imported from the United States, in feature films (including British-made films) and in numerous boxed and online videogames. PP is also permitted on online drama: this anomaly will become more apparent as online and digital content platforms converge.

British television is hugely important, not just as a commercial enterprise, but as a vibrant and vital part of British life and culture. We do not foresee any circumstances where PP aimed at children would be acceptable and we welcome the decision to retain the ban on PP in children's television.

But television production in this country is facing an unprecedented funding crisis; writers, producers and writer-producers are forced to compete on an unlevel playing field with overseas and online competitors. In this climate, the option of product placement in programmes for adults needs to be considered pragmatically. To quote Gail Renard, former chair of the WGGB and a BAFTA-winning screenwriter: "I'm not against product placement under carefully considered and controlled circumstances... but it can neither be a knee-jerk reaction nor miracle cure for poor network management and/or programming."

You can read the rest of this response written by Edel Brosnan, for the Guild's TV Committee, on the Guild website:

[**WGGB response to product placement consultation**](#)

Events

West Midlands Writers' Guild presents Writing For Publication

When: Friday 22nd January, 7.30pm

Where: Centenary Suite, Birmingham Rep Theatre

Cost: Free to Writers' Guild Members; £5 for non-members, payable at the door

Please email WMidWritersGuild@aol.com to confirm your attendance.

The panel comprises:

Laura Longrigg, director of MBA Literary Agents. Laura has worked in publishing for nearly 25 years. As an editor, mostly in the genre of popular fiction, she worked for HarperCollins, Heinemann and Penguin. She became an agent in 1994, working first with Jennifer Kavanagh, and in 1997 she joined MBA. Since becoming an agent, her interests have broadened to include literary fiction and non-fiction, including history, biography, travel, self-help, health and parenting. She has also worked with children's authors.

Alan Mahar, publishing director of Tindall Street Press, an independent publisher of regional literary fiction with a national reputation for excellence and a prize-listing record that is the envy of many established imprints (including three Booker nominations and two Costa first novel awards - its 2010 award just announced). Based in Birmingham, Tindal Street Press aims to find writers of national and international significance from places other than London and the South East.

Jane Commane, the co-director of Nine Arches Press, an independent and innovative poetry publisher based in the West Midlands that aims to bring you the best in contemporary British poetry. It publishes *Under The Radar* magazine as well as poetry books and pamphlets.

Jacqui Rowe, the Co-Director of Flarestack Poets, a new venture under the Flarestack imprint. Following its launch anthology in November 2009 it will be publishing six poetry titles in 2010. Flarestack pamphlets have a reputation for quality and diversity, and for encouraging work from new and established voices.

Dave Reeves, the director of Radio Wildfire, which broadcasts from the West Midlands via the internet live on the first Monday of each month. It focuses on live literature, spoken word performances and oral art.

The panel will be chaired by **Helen Cross**, the author of three novels: *The Secrets She Keeps*, *My Summer of Love* (which won a Betty Trask Prize and was made into an award-winning film) and *Spilt Milk, Black Coffee*, published by Bloomsbury in May 2009.

How to release a feature film theatrically in the UK

Special Screening of *EXAM* and workshop at 2.15pm Sunday 10th January at the Odeon, Panton Street, Leicester Square, London

A special event from the authors of *The Guerrilla Film Makers Handbook*

After the screening the film makers reveal just how they made this low budget Brit psycho-thriller, got it into theatres and ended up with four-star reviews from both *Total Film* and *Empire*. Rotten Tomatoes also gave it the Editor's pick, and film critic Mark Kermode gave it a big thumbs-up.

Chris Jones, one of the producers of *EXAM*, will - along with the writer and director **Stuart Hazeldine** - chair a 90-minute workshop. Expect direct, honest and robust conversation targeted at helping film-makers to learn how to get their films into cinemas. Tickets are £14 and available only from the organisers: mail@livingspirit.com

Watch a clip: <http://www.chrisjonesblog.com/2010/01/do-you-know-how-to-release-a-feature-film-theatrically-in-the-uk-special-screening-of-exam-and-works.html>

Q&A with Gregory Burke at the Glasgow Centre for Contemporary Arts

When: Wednesday 20th January 2010, 7pm - 8.30pm

Where: Centre for Contemporary Arts, 350 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow

BBC Scotland and the Playwrights' Studio, Scotland present Guild member Gregory Burke, the award-winning author of *Gagarin Way* and *Black Watch*, whose first television drama, *One Night in Emergency*, will air on BBC 1 Scotland in the new year. Gregory will be in conversation with Julie Ellen, Creative Director of the Playwrights' Studio, Scotland. Their talk will cover his career, inspirations and experiences, questions will be taken from the floor. This event is part of the Scotland Writes initiative from BBC Scotland, which aims to find new Scottish writers.

This is a free event, but spaces are limited. To book tickets call the CCA Box Office on 0141 352 4900. For more information email info@playwrightsstudio.co.uk

5 X 15 - Five speakers, 15 minutes each

Five outstanding individuals enlighten, entertain and inspire as they tell the story behind their most innovative ideas, grandest achievements and deepest obsessions - all in just 15 minutes. Witness it live at the Tabernacle in Notting Hill, West London.

18th January:

[Jack Klaff](#) recounts stories of missing links and the public understanding of science

[Hannah Rothschild](#) on the English baroness who fell in love with Thelonious

Monk

[Hanan al-Shaykh](#) on her mother's extraordinary life in Lebanon

[Rupert Sheldrake](#) on morphic resonance

[Sara Wheeler](#) on exploring the harsh and beautiful Arctic

For more details email info@5X15stories.com

Centralising Coding and Mux - The Next Generation in Digital Distribution

Royal Television Society event

13th January

Coding and Muxing - the process that happens to a TV signal after it has left the playout centre and before it gets to the transmitter - has gone through great changes in the 11 years since the UK launched digital TV.

In preparation for digital switch-over on terrestrial and HD on satellite, Siemens has been engaged in transforming the way in which the BBC digital channels, with all their regional and national variants, are handled. This is a far from simple job, and the plans had to be radically revised following the decision that PSB3 should carry terrestrial HD signals from 2 December 2009. The speakers look at the BBC requirements, the collaboration with Siemens, and how the facilities have been designed, built and are operated.

Speakers: Andy Whadcoat, Head of Networks and Broadcast, and Graham Whiting, Principal Project Manager, Media Systems. Both are from Siemens IT Solutions and Services

Cost: Free

Time: 7pm - tea and coffee from 6.30pm

Venue: ITV, the London Studios, Upper Ground, South Bank, London SE1 9LT. Waterloo is the nearest train and Tube station.

Please register at LondonCentreEvents@rts.org.uk

For details of all RTS London events - put on by the members for the members, go to www.rts.org.uk >>RTS in your Area>>> London >>Events

Poet in the City event with Seamus Heaney

Monday 22nd February in Hall One at Kings Place, York Way, London N1

6.30 pm: the event itself will start promptly at 7pm.

The event, which is being held jointly with the Royal Society of Literature, will feature the Nobel Prize-winning Seamus Heaney in conversation with Bernard O'Donoghue, together with readings of his poetry by special guests, including the author and critic Andrew O'Hagen and the poets Nick Laird, Jo Shapcott and Jon Stallworthy.

Tickets cost £9.50 for *Poet in the City* and RSL members, and are available directly through the Kings Place Box office on 020-7520 1490. *Poet in the City* members should quote code PICSH. (RSL members should quote their Fellowship or Membership number).

As tickets are likely to sell out very quickly. please book immediately to avoid disappointment. For inquiries relating to your booking please contact tickets@kingsplace.co.uk. To check ticket availability please use the online booking service at www.kingsplace.co.uk. For general inquiries email info@kingsplace.co.uk.

Courses and Workshops

The business of writing – today and tomorrow (a two-module event)

This event is delivered in two modules covering different aspects of the subject. Module 1 will raise issues relevant to writers such as best deals when negotiating publishing contracts, the value of copyright in the digital age; while module 2 will debate the future of publishing and the effect of digital distribution on the status and business of writing.

Module 1: Rights for authors – a practical guide to making money from writing

When: 27th January from 6pm-8pm, followed by drinks/networking until 9pm

Where: Podium Lecture Theatre, London College of Communication, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6SB

Knowing about copyright and other related IP rights gives writers an advantage when negotiating contracts with commissioners or even your own agent. Much has changed in the last decade. This seminar will give you an overview of relevant IP rights, how to protect, manage and exploit it to make a living as a writer.

Module 2: New ways of publishing – the effects of digital technology on the future of publishing and the status of the author

When: 11th February from 6pm-8pm, followed by drinks/networking until 9pm

Where: Main Lecture Theatre, London College of Communication, Elephant & Castle, London, SE1 6SB

Own-it and [ALCS](#) (Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society) have invited a panel of experts to discuss the effects of digital technology on the future of publishing and what impact new digital developments have on the value of copyright for the individual author. The panel will be chaired by **Joan Smith**, English writer, journalist and human rights activist.

Please note that this is a two-module event and you are required to reserve your place on Module 1 and 2 to attend.

Admission is free, but places are limited. To reserve your place, please register and book online at: <http://www.own-it.org/events/the-business-of-writing-today-and-tomorrow-a-two-module-event>

Mastering your craft: BAFTA Training Day at London Short Film Festival

Where: Run Run Shaw Theatre, BAFTA, 195 Piccadilly, W1J 9LN

When: Sunday 17th January from 11am (please note each session start time is as listed below).

This is a rare opportunity to take part in small group sessions with some of the top creative talents in the industry. Each of the two-hour sessions will be led by a top practitioner - editor, screenwriter, DoP. The intimate and interactive round-table format will allow those attending to explore an area of each craft in more detail than is possible in a Q&A - each session will include no more than 25 participants. These are intended as craft-specific training sessions for new and emerging film makers and **you must have prior experience in the field to attend**. Work could include a short film credit, or we will accept film students from each field.

11am-1pm: Screenwriting - the speaker for this session will be announced shortly.

1:15-3:15pm: Editing - the speaker for this session will be announced shortly.

3:30-5:30pm: Cinematography with John de Borman - the award-winning cinematographer (*An Education, Hideous Kinky, Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day*) will lead this session for DoPs and camera crew. Using his recent *An Education* (for which he won a cinematography award at Sundance) as a reference, he'll explore good scheduling and planning strategies for being able to deliver the shots on a tight budget.

5:30-6:30: informal drink - all ticket holders for one of the events are invited to join us for a drink at BAFTA at the day's end.

All tickets are £5 per two-hour session. To proceed to the booking page, please click [here](#). Please note that this event is aimed at career starters and entry-level participants.

HOTHOUSE at the London Film School

Dates: April 2010 – June 2011

Phase One application deadline: 18th January 2010

HOTHOUSE is a new atelier for the creative development of nine signature feature films by means of self-reflection, investigation of the work, engagement with peers and interaction with professionals in all aspects of independent filmmaking. HOTHOUSE provides an opportunity for those who have already had some success in an expressive medium – film, performance, theatre, visual arts, broadcasting, new media, literature, etc – to develop a signature independent feature film and make it ready for financing and production. Rather than working in isolation, writers,

directors and producers are given a calendar of group seminars, individual meetings, deadlines and feedback, case studies and mentoring built on the specific challenges of each proposed film. Working from idea through structuring and revising, scheduling and budgeting, to packaging options, the nine participants will emerge with workable projects tied to realistic finance plans.

For more information on HOTHOUSE, including how to apply, please visit www.lfs.org.uk or contact us: hothouse.info@lfs.org.uk / 020 7836 9642.

HOTHOUSE is generously supported and subsidised by Skillset.

Venue: Central London. To be announced.

Date: Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th February 2009

10.30am-5pm (registration 9.45am)

Price: £150 (£135 concessions)

[Click here to log on to Euroscript.](#)

Make Your Novel a Reality in 2010: a four-week masterclass

Join this inspiring four-week teleconference course with five of the industry's top professionals. You dial in from the comfort of your sofa on your landline. Calls are charged at 1.7p per minute, or free via Skype (see Conferencegenie.co.uk for more information).

It will fire your imagination and creativity and equip you with the practical knowledge you need to take your writing to the next level. You will learn about writing methods, narrative strategies and have access to the insider secrets that will ensure your work gets to the desks of agents and publishers.

If you want to write fiction and you need the inspiration to get started or to push on and finish your novel, this is the course for you.

Week One: February 1st with author Matt Whyman

Week Two: February 8th with author Naomi Wood

Week Three: February 22nd with Emma Rose, ex-commissioning editor of Arrow, Random House

Week Four: March 1st with agent Kirsty McLachlan, joined by agent and co-founder of LWC, Jacq Burns

All calls are recorded so you won't miss out if you can't participate on the night.

Price: £97

www.publishabestseller.com/make-your-novel-a-reality/

Constellation Workshop for Screenwriters

Time: 10am Saturday 30th January 2010

Place: The Shed, 348-352 High Street, Gateshead NE8 1EN

Cost: £200

A one-day workshop for screenwriters wanting to explore their work and characters on a deeper level. With writer/producer Anne Risaria Langley and writer/director Deborah Hadfield. For more information visit www.arlangleyproductions.co.uk or ring 07914012589

Opportunities

The Tinniswood and Imison Radio Awards 2010: Call for Entries

The Tinniswood Award for best original radio drama script was established by the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild of Great Britain to perpetuate the memory of Peter Tinniswood, as well as to celebrate and encourage high standards in radio drama.

Submissions are by producer only and are restricted to a maximum of two entries per producer. We would like to encourage producers to send in quality scripts and would prefer a script that you are confident is the best.

The Tinniswood Award is generously supported by the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society Ltd.

Please note that the 2010 Tinniswood Award will be administered by the Writers' Guild of Great Britain and submissions should be sent to Anne Hogben at the offices at 40 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RX.

The Imison Award encourages new talent by rewarding the best original radio drama by a writer new to radio. Now in its seventeenth year the Award perpetuates the memory of Richard Imison to acknowledge the encouragement he gave to writers working in the medium of radio, and is given in memory of the support and friendship he invariably offered writers in general, and radio writers in particular.

The Imison Award is administered and judged by the Society of Authors and we are grateful to the Peggy Ramsay Foundation for generously funding the £1,500 prize money.

Please send submissions to Sarah Baxter, The Society of Authors, 84 Drayton Gardens, London SW10 9SB.

The deadline for entry to both Awards is Friday 5th February 2010.

The Moondance 2010 Competition

The competition opens for submissions on 1st January, and we know you are busy putting the final touches on your films, written works and film scores for consideration at our next truly independent film festival. Be sure to check out the news about [WAB](#), our online submission service, offering the option (see below) of submitting online videos in 2010, instead of mailing DVDs. We gladly accept mailed DVDs for previews, of course, but now you have an option. Screenplays and other written works still need to be submitted in hard copy. Music and film score entries need to be submitted on audiocassette or CD.

- Feature & short animation
- Documentary
- Narrative films
- Feature & short films for kids
- Feature multi-media film
- Feature & short screenplays
- Feature screenplays for kids

- Film scores
- Music videos
- Short films by kids & for kids
- Short stories
- Stage plays
- Teleplays
- Radio plays & more!

Please visit the new Moondance website for more info, guidelines & and entry form:
www.moondancefilmfestival.com

The Windsor Fringe Marriott Award For New Drama Writing

Amateur playwrights are invited to submit unpublished one-act plays for the seventh £500 Windsor Fringe Marriott Drama Writing Award. Three winning scripts will be selected for performances during three Drama Nights at the Windsor Fringe on 7th, 8th and 9th October. One of the three scripts will be chosen, purely on the writing, for the £500 prize. Submissions must be received by 4th March 2010.

Eligibility

Only amateur playwrights are eligible; only one script per author will be accepted. Each play must be an original work by the entrant, and submitted scripts must not have been previously published or performed.

Criteria

Each play must be no more than 30 minutes long, have a cast of no more than six actors, and be suitable for staging in a studio theatre.

Submission guidelines

So that each script may be judged anonymously, the author's name must appear on the cover page only, not in the script. Writers should submit **two copies** of their plays, printed on loose sheets of A4 paper with no binding or stapling. Pages must be numbered. No submissions will be accepted by email; no scripts will be returned. The cover page must show the name of the play and the author's name, contact details

and signature. A **£5 reading fee** will be charged per entry. Please make cheques payable to **Windsor Fringe**. Scripts should be sent together with the reading fee to:

The Windsor Fringe Marriott Drama Writing Award

Suite 640, 24-28 St Leonard's Road

Windsor, Berks SL4 3BB UK

Selection process

All submissions will be evaluated anonymously by our panel of readers, and the final short list by our judges. Last year, they were **Joanne Harris and Iqbal Khan**. Judges for 2010 to be confirmed.

The three winning authors will be notified by the middle of June 2010. Results of the competition will be announced through the media, the Windsor Fringe website and to writers groups receiving this notice. Rehearsals will start at the beginning of August; performances will take place on the last three evenings of the Windsor Fringe Festival, and the winner of the £500 award will be announced on the last night.

The Windsor Fringe Marriott Drama Award will underwrite the staging of the three plays with selected directors.

For additional information contact Ann Trewartha on 01753 863218 or email: ann.trewartha@btinternet.com

Editor's note: The Windsor Fringe was established in 1969, making it the oldest Fringe Festival in England and the second oldest, after Edinburgh, in the UK. Run by an all-volunteer committee, each year the Windsor Fringe stages an inspired and innovative programme of music, dance, comedy, drama and art. The Windsor Fringe web site is at www.windsorfringe.co.uk

Northern Writers' Awards 2010

There are lots of great opportunities for writers coming up from New Writing North this year. Our focus for 2010 is very much on helping new writers to take the next big steps with their careers and on seeking out and creating real commissioning opportunities for more established writers.

Next week we will be launching the 2010 Northern Writers' Awards and announcing this year's judges. With £25,000 of prize money up for grabs plus the chance to meet industry contacts and to be supported to develop your fiction, children's fiction, poetry and creative non-fiction, it's a chance not to be missed.

Also this month we will be launching the 2010 People's Play Award, our biennial project for first-time playwrights. With a £2,000 prize to be won and the chance to see your play produced by the theatre this November, this is a wonderful opportunity for writers who aspire to write for the stage.

Scriptwriters will also be interested in our new Development Programme, which we are currently recruiting for until 15 January. Through this scheme, up to four writers will be supported by theatre director Deborah Bruce to complete a full-length play. At the end of the process, we would anticipate that one of the plays will be selected to be fully commissioned, produced and toured by the North East Theatre Consortium, a group of organisations led by New Writing North along with three regional venues: Queen's Hall in Hexham, The Customs House in South Shields, and Darlington Arts Centre. The consortium has previously produced and toured *Pub Quiz* by Carina Rodney and *Queen Bee* by Margaret Wilkinson. Click [here](#) to download full details about the scheme and guidelines on how to enter.

Writers' and artists' retreats in southern Italy

Situated in the coastal village of Ascea, also the site of the ancient Greek settlement of Elea, about 90 minutes by train or car from Naples. Five apartments rented only to writers, artists, composers, scholars and others working in creative fields.

For details the apartments please visit <http://www.italyallyear.com/writers.php>. There is also information on how to travel to Ascea on the Cilento Coast.

http://www.parmenideum.com/index_philo.html

What Members Are Getting Up To

MARTIN ALLEN wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 on Friday 15th January at 8.30pm.

DAVID ASHTON wrote the last instalment of *McLevy* going out on BBC Radio 4 at 2.15pm.

ALAN AYCKBOURN's 1977 play *Just Between Ourselves* has been adapted by Gordon House for the Saturday 9th January *Afternoon Play*, going out on BBC Radio 4 at 2.30pm.

SARAH BAGSHAW wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 on Wednesday 13th January at 7pm.

CHRIS CHIBNALL wrote the episode of *Law & Order UK* going out on ITV1 on Monday 11th January at 9pm.

SARAH DANIELS wrote the abridged version of *The Jonestown Letters* going out on BBC Radio 4 at 2.15pm.

KRIS DYER and DAVE MARKS wrote the episode of *On the Blog* going out on BBC Radio 2 at 10pm on Thursday 14 th January.

ANDREA EARL wrote the *Afternoon Play: Solace* going out on BBC Radio 4 at 2.15pm.

JAN ETHERINGTON's first Comedy Writing Course for 2010 takes place on 30th/31st January. Limited numbers/special guest/great lunch . . . Details: www.comedycourse.biz, or call 0788 7907713.

PETER FLANNERY wrote the episode of *Inspector George Gently* going out on BBC1 on Wednesday 13th January at 8.30pm.

SIMON FRITH wrote next week's episodes of *The Archers* going out on BBC Radio 4. On Friday 15th January at 7pm, Mike dances his way out of trouble.

BILL GALLAGHER wrote the first episode of the new series of *Lark Rise to Candleford*, going out on BBC1 on Sunday 10th January at 8pm.

JULIA GILBERT wrote the episode of *EastEnders* going out on BBC1 on Monday 11th January at 8pm.

MARCUS GOODWIN wrote the episode of *Doctors* going out on BBC1 on Tuesday 12th January at 1.45pm.

HENRIETTA HARDY wrote the episode of *Doctors* going out on BBC1 on Thursday 14th January at 1.45pm.

ADRIAN HODGES wrote the episode of *Survivors* going out on BBC1 on Tuesday 12th January at 9pm.

JAN McVERRY wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 on Monday 11th January at 7.30pm.

GRAHAM MITCHELL wrote the episode of *Holby City* going out on BBC1 on Tuesday 12th January at 8pm.

SUE MOONEY wrote the episode of *Emmerdale* going out on ITV1 on Tuesday 12th January at 7pm.

OLLY PERKIN wrote the episode of *Doctors* going out on BBC1 on Friday 15th January at 1.45pm.

DAVID RENWICK is the subject of a British Film Institute season throughout January. There will be screenings at the BFI Southbank of episodes from *Agatha*

Christie's Poirot, *Jonathan Creek*, *One Foot in the Grave*, *One Foot in the Algarve* and *Whoops Apocalypse*. In addition, he will give an illustrated career interview

before the screening of *Love Soup: There Must Be Some Way out of Here*. For more details, and to book, visit

http://www.bfi.org.uk/whatson/bfi_southbank/film_programme/january_seasons/david_renwick

Part Two of VICTOR SCHONFELD's series *One Planet: Animals & Us* will be broadcast on the BBC World Service from Thursday 7th January and is also on 'Listen Again' <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/>. Part One - which looks at the use of animals for food and turns to experts in fields such as psychology, history, language and neurology to find out why humans seem so attracted to eating meat - can be found on 'Listen Again'

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/science/2009/03/000000_one_planet.shtml.

Part Two focuses on the scientific establishment's attachment to using animals, and also concludes the series by considering the future: might ending the suffering of animals at human hands greatly benefit people, too? Both programmes will be permanently available from the BBC World Service Science page.

JOE TURNER wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 on Thursday 14th January at 8.30pm.

MARK WADLOW wrote the episode of *Coronation Street* going out on ITV1 on Monday 11th January at 8.30pm.

ED WHITMORE wrote the episode of *Silent Witness* going out on BBC1 on Thursday 14th January at 9pm.

JOY WILKINSON wrote the dramatisation of *Towards Zero* by Agatha Christie going out on BBC Radio 4 at 11.30am.

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