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Supporting

Writers

and Writing

# Artful Scribe

[artfulscribe.co.uk](http://artfulscribe.co.uk)

**ArtfulScribe** is a writer development agency championing writers and **writing through meaningful connections** with individuals, communities, businesses and organisations. We help others shape and share experiences, both real and imagined, through written and spoken word, **by providing workshops, publication, performance and placement opportunities.**

### Vision and Mission:

- 1. Raise the profile of writers and writing:** innovate, educate and celebrate through Live Literature and written/spoken word events.
- 2. Empower marginalised voices in the community** through projects that foster greater understanding of specific groups and celebrate differences.
- 3. Build new audiences:** create events and showcases that challenge expectations and champion new writing in both conventional and non-art-specific spaces.
- 4. Nurture talent** with investment in young people aged 25 and under through library programmes, school slams, young writer groups and bespoke projects.
- 5. Develop emerging and continuing writers** to sustain portfolio career paths through residencies and Career and Professional Development opportunities.
- 6. Embed creative writing and storytelling** at the heart of communities, businesses and organisations.
- 7. Encourage collaborative partnerships** that make best use of networks, resources and experiences.
- 8. Cultivate environments that support inclusivity and diversity** throughout the workplace.

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# Welcome

## Words Change Lives

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**It's a humbling place to begin, with a realisation of the remarkable power of words and the impact they can have people's lives.**

**As director of ArtfulScribe I've been fortunate enough to see this for myself on countless occasions since 2011 when we began journeying towards raising the profile of writers and writing in the region.**

So much can be done through support and encouragement, from empowering those voices that might not otherwise be heard, to shining a light on the road up ahead for writers who are looking to develop their craft through workshops, training, performance, publication and placement opportunities.

Writing is for everybody. It doesn't discriminate over age, race or gender. It just requires the confidence to pick up a pen, to string together a sequence of words and willingness amongst the brave to be vulnerable and share this creativity with other people. Through writing, friendships are forged, communities form and together we can make meaningful difference from our encounters with others.

I'm immensely proud of the work **ArtfulScribe** has accomplished over the years, thanks to the dedication and commitment of our delivery team who give new voices a chance to be heard, nurturing talent and signposting avenues for development for those who wish to take their writing further. I'm incredibly thankful to the support and encouragement we receive from a wide range of partners who share out passion to celebrate writers and writing at a local and national level, finding new audiences for established professionals and those stepping out into the word for the first time.

**Matthew West**

Director





**From our administrative base in the port of Southampton we are perfectly placed at the hub of a multicultural society. Our recruitment policy reflects the global reach of writing in English and our facilitators are selected to celebrate a wealth of story-telling traditions from around the world.**

We actively engage with and welcome opportunities to learn more about this human experience from diverse points of view and work with writers and performers who challenge preconceived notions of normality, celebrating the differences that make us unique.

From hosting symposiums on accessibility and needs for D/deaf, disabled and those facing other barriers to engagement, to delivering workshops that focus on translating and sharing creative writing in different languages, we are constantly striving towards inclusive environments that equally value all participants.



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**Learning helps us grow as individuals and helps us live enriched and purposeful lives. At ArtfulScribe we are always learning, both at an organisational level and through our everyday encounters with different writers and forms of writing.**

We work across age-groups, from primary years to those in life's later stages, teaching elements of craft and creating a supportive environment that encourages sharing, gently pushing beyond comfort zones and opening new doors of development through personal practice.

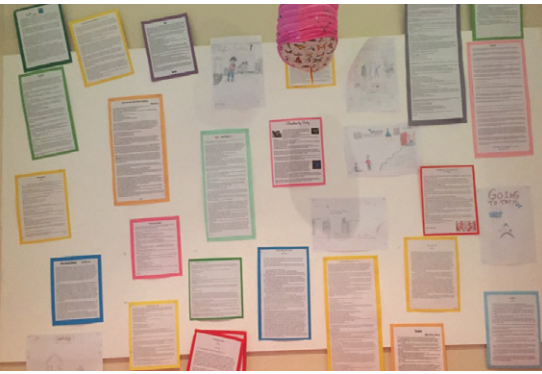
We also provide training for people looking to expand their industry knowledge through helpful workshops on topics like self-publishing, self-promotion, working as a writing in schools and educational settings, and by inviting guest facilitators to share skills and experiences gathered over years of professional practice.

Please get in touch via the website at [artfulscribe.co.uk](https://artfulscribe.co.uk) for the latest information on forthcoming workshops and to find out more about what's going on.



# Young Writers: Primary Years

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We believe it's important to show children how creative writing takes place in society beyond as well as within the school gates. We reach children through mixed faith and mixed nationality workshops held in public settings as well as by visiting schools, helping children delight in word play through language-based games, nurturing a love of literature that can last a lifetime.

*'We're still quoting verse around the school today – everyone was inspired in some way by your workshops. Staff really benefited by seeing how you motivated the children with quick, active ice-breakers and starting points and challenges to help in the creation of new writing.'*

**Carole Pugh**

Merdon Junior School, Hampshire

*'The workshops engaged with 150 children and their families who came from all backgrounds and cultures reflecting the multi-cultural status of the city. The workshops raised the profile of **Summer Reading Challenge** and enhanced the experience for the children who took part.'*

**Allison Kirby**

Reading and Resources

Development Officer

Central Library, Southampton



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# Young Writers: Mayflower & Lighthouse Theatres

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Our work with young people includes building links and signposting towards creative writing opportunities elsewhere in the community. We host regular workshops for young people aged 11-14 and 15-18 in Hampshire and Dorset on Saturday mornings during term time. An Under 25's evening group is scheduled to start in 2019.

*'ArtfulScribe is an Associate Company at Mayflower Theatre and joins the theatre's vision to create closer relationships between audiences and artists who create and perform on Mayflower Theatre's stage. Our partnership with ArtfulScribe has strengthened Mayflower Theatre's Engage programme, reaching out to the local community and supporting education, which has been a key part of the development of the theatre over the past five years. Our Mayflower Young Writers groups continue to go from strength to strength and offer a unique opportunity for local young people to develop their writing skills, have fun, and meet like-minded people.'*

**Sara Scott**

Head of Creative Learning – Mayflower Theatre



*'It was such a great, interactive day and the pupils gained a fantastic insight into writing and developing poems. They loved the games, too, which led to it being a fun team-building day.'*

### Colette Mitchell

The Free Reach School

Rickmansworth

As a teenager it isn't always easy to see the relevance of school-based writing to everyday life. Our schools' work approaches young people on their terms, exploring links between lyrics, rhythm and rhyme from musical genres including Rap and Hip-Hop as a way of encouraging conversation about poetry and spoken word, leading to new writing for performance that raises confidence and allows young creative talent to shine.

*'I needed to contact you after the poetry slam last night in Romsey. It certainly isn't the sort of thing I usually find myself at, but I can honestly say it was the most impressive thing I have attended in all my years of attending school events with my children. More than that, I came out of the evening a slightly different person than when I went in – a change for the good, unexpected at the age of 47, more so when that change has been affected by 13 and 14 year-old children. Just amazing.'*

### Audience member

Wessex Schools Slam 2018

*'I am writing to thank you for organising this year's Wessex **Schools Poetry Slam** following the huge success of the school-based workshops. The effect on our students has been substantial. Their confidence to speak and perform has skyrocketed. Pupil engagement in **Spoken Word** has spread from the slam epicentre, inspiring young people right across the school.'*

### James Wyatt

Teacher of English and Drama

Noadswood School, Hampshire





# Career & Professional Development Progressive Pathways

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*'ArtfulScribe provides an invaluable resource for literature, identifying and supporting writers to develop sustainable portfolio careers, combining writing with workshop leadership and training opportunities.'*

**James Gough**

Director – Southampton Cultural Development Trust



Image

*'Yesterday, 3 years ago (I think) U had y very first gig as a supporting poet. The audience was poet-full and because they were now watching me – instead of me having watched them over the previous year – it felt like an initiation ceremony. That day really meant something and changed my ideas about who I was.'*

**Damian O'Vitch**

Poet from Hampshire

Whether you're a student taking the next step in your journey as a writer, a performer looking for a stage for new work, or an experienced writer who wants to gain practical experience and skills to earn a living through writing-related activities, **ArtfulScribe** can help realise your potential.

## You don't have to lose your voice to find it again through a creative writing workshop.

We offer a wide range of writing experiences aimed at both new and continuing writers, encouraging people to engage with new styles of writing from 'Writing about Theatre', or 'Writing about Dance' through to more traditional workshops exploring all aspects of craft.

If you're interested in writing for stage, screen, radio, performance or page we can help writers find courses that are relevant and delivered by workshop facilitators who have years of experience guiding participants to create new work or refine an existing practice.

*'I would have had no interest in poetry at all without losing my voice and going on that first workshop – it's just superb, and talking about and sharing poetry is all kinds of fun. I'm very glad to be writing now. It's excellent.'*

**Lisa Thorne**

Workshop Participant

Please sign up to our newsletter or check the events page at [artfulscribe.co.uk](http://artfulscribe.co.uk) to stay up-to-date with opportunities throughout the region.





# My ArtfulScribe Experience

## Bridget Hart – Intern 2013-14

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As a mature student, I went into my degree with five years of junior office work experience. I wanted to apply those skills to building up a career in something that I also had passion for.

I was coming to the end of my first year of running the **Poetry Society** at Southampton University. After asking to help with **ArtfulScribe** I became quickly integrated in the foundations of the first project, **Archimedes Screw**.

I learnt about the **Arts Council** and the importance of evaluation and feedback sheets. I started editing **Voice FM** interviews into blog entries which introduced (and challenged) me to new ways of writing. I found myself at workshops and showcases, becoming a familiar figure within the community which has not only helped my professional confidence but also my ability to network and communicate with new contacts.

I have been introduced to new poetry, spoken word shows, techniques and enterprises that have contributed to my decision to further my career in spoken word, both personally and professionally. As I have been exposed to the significant and sometimes overlooked aspects of event organisation, **ArtfulScribe** has gradually given me greater roles in these processes. I am now at a level where I can confidently organise an event, considering the smaller and larger details as well as being prepared for any setbacks that may occur.



As well as hands-on experience with events, workshops and administration, **ArtfulScribe** has helped me to extend my poetic skills across to new experiences and projects. I have been able to transfer my skills from **Archimedes Screw workshops** to my personal writing, becoming an **Archimedes Screw** champion, **Ejector Seat 2013 Slam champion** and a festival performer. I have met influential poets, writers and organisers that have shared their knowledge and experiences.

I started compering **Archimedes Screw Showcases** and shadowing professional poets at Masterclasses. Compering the showcases was a big learning curve for me and with each one I got a little better. It's difficult, at first, to gauge your audience and to not be overwhelmed. It is you that has to bring the energy, to get the crowd excited and

warmed up for the entertainment ahead. It is important to keep consistent too. I learnt quickly to make notes before each event, including short introductions for local poets and the headline act and information on future events.

I loved compering and I hope I get to do it again soon; there's nothing quite like the buzz that tingles out of your finger tips and gets a crowd alive.

Since leaving **ArtfulScribe**, Bridget has become editor at **Burning Eye books**.





**While the tools for writing can be as simple as a pen or pencil and a piece of paper, the potential outcomes for writing encompass a broad range of possibilities. Our work pushes conventional boundaries through cross- art form collaborations challenging conceptions of what writing is and what writing can be.**

We've worked with partners to create soundscapes in schools, mixing location-specific sounds with recorded speech from texts generated in workshop settings, curated poetry-film competitions and screenings and projected the winning films on storefronts in town centres.

In 2019, in partnership with **Audacious Arts** and **Light Up Poole**, our outreach work with primary school children in Dorset led to a connection with 'Nightwriter Nyx', a programmable robot from the Netherlands, created by **Gijs van Bon**, that reproduced the children's text in luminous script, absorbed by an estimated audience of 45k.

*'ArtfulScribe and Light Up Poole collaborate to create fascinating projects with global reach. Our poetry workshops developed literacy skills in over 330 children and our film poetry project engaged people from 12 different countries including Brazil, USA, Puerto Rico, Spain, France and Germany. Our projects fuse arts and emerging technologies, presenting our work in unusual spaces by innovative means.'*

**Libby Battaglia**

Creative Director, Light Up Poole



Showcases offer an opportunity for writers to be inspired by visiting artists, for developing audiences by showing a range of outcomes leading from Creative Writing activities, and for project participants to share outcomes through support slots and open mic.

**ArtfulScribe** curates live literature events that help raise the profile of writers and writing in the south. In 2013-14 we worked in partnership with **Apples and Snakes** to deliver the **'Archimedes Screw'**, a series of events headlined by national and international poets and performers including an open mic element where an audience vote selected local writers to be awarded with paid gigs as part of a career and professional development scheme. Since then, we've programmed theatre shows and live literature performances in medieval buildings, parks, museums, libraries, cafes and more traditional festival and theatre spaces.

In 2018 we curated **SO:To Speak**, a 3 day festival including a seminar on accessibility, a showcase of local writers who worked on the **SO:Write project**, three small press showcases featuring writers from *Penned in the Margins*, *Nine Arches Press*, and *Burning Eye Books* and Antosh Wojcik's headline show, *'How To Keep Time: A Drum Solo for Dementia'* with support from Sarah Hesketh, author of *'The Hard Word Box'*.

The festival culminated in a publication launch featuring our **Writers in Residence** from **Mayflower Theatre, John Hansard Gallery** and **Southampton Libraries** alongside writers from our regular **Women's Writing** groups and **Young Writers'** groups.



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**ArtfulScribe champions young voices, igniting careers by investing in training opportunities and recruiting new writers we believe have the power to inspire others to gain new perspectives of the world.**

Working in partnership with universities and youth agencies, **ArtfulScribe** supports young people to gain vital work placement and job-shadowing experiences. Our facilitators are trained to deliver **Arts Awards**, helping others to develop leadership and organisational skills, from event management to learning about digital marketing, social media and writing for commercial publication.

Keen to empower young voices in the community, in 2019 we recruited Tabitha Hayward, a writer under the age of 25, to lead our weekly term-time **Lighthouse Young Writers** groups in Poole, with support from **Arts University Bournemouth** second year Creative Writing student, Lucy Pearce.

Arts and culture develop skills for the future, using skills that only humans can bring; empathy, creativity and enterprise. Arts and cultural education nurtures these skills and prepares young people for new creative professions of the future.

# My ArtfulScribe Experience

## Dae Fletcher

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I've been writing almost as long as I can remember – I used to sit in the old over-sized desk chair and type pages of 8-year-old fantasy, mostly stories or songs, but I first remember being drawn to poetry when we did a school project on it in Year 4.



I'm often inspired to write by the situations at hand or by a desire to better understand my feelings about a topic or person. A lot of my writing is incredibly personal, focusing on my own experiences and identities, delving into topics such as gender, disability and relationships.

I performed at **Brighton Trans-Pride** in 2016. The whole event was so welcoming and wonderful. It was incredible to get to be around and to perform to so many people in my community – it was probably one of the best experiences I have ever had.

I was never actually meant to be in the **Wessex Schools Slam**. I begged the librarian to let me take part. When I got up on the night, I was so nervous. No-one else had ever heard the poem I was going to perform, and it was an incredibly frank and personal piece about my experiences under the influence of an eating disorder. Performing it was such a release, finally opening up about something I'd never been able to speak about before. I spent most of the rest of the evening in a wave of adrenalin and the win didn't really sink in until the next day. It was incredible.

I'm now studying a Creative Writing course and that was the actual reason why I picked my college. I've never regretted that decision. I don't know where I'd be if I hadn't won the slam. It really acted as a springboard, leading to other gigs and events. I've come so far since, not just in my writing. My confidence in myself has grown, as well as my ability to relate and interact with others, no matter how different we may seem at first glance.

**ArtfulScribe** provided me with so many fantastic opportunities. They help to bring young people into the literary world from outside of school. It's so important. They give young people new tools to express themselves in a creative and supportive environment, without the huge emphasis on needing to be 'right' that exists in schools.



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## My ArtfulScribe Experience **Dinos Aristidou**

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**Dinos Aristidou is a Brighton-based writer, theatre maker, artist educator and consultant with an international CV through placements at the Civil Rights Theatre Festival at Atlanta, USA, the Western International School of Shanghai Academy, and the Phnom Penh International School.**

At a national level, Dinos has produced work for the **Birmingham Royal National Ballet**, the **National Trust**, and the **Royal National College** for the blind. In 2017 Dinos was appointed as **Writer in Residence at Mayflower Theatre** as part of the **SO:Write** project, a two-year literature development programme led by **ArtfulScribe** through funding from **Arts Council England** and support from local partners.

*“I’ve had an amazing year and felt very at home [...] working in a non-commissioning space where I had opportunity to engage as an observer. Never in a million years could I have predicted that I would have been inspired in such a metaphoric way, blending family history, national identity and residency observations to create a new text that would enable me to use the Odysseus story as a backbone to telling my own tale.”*

**Dinos Aristidou**

Writer, theatre maker, artist educator  
and consultant

During the course of his residency, Dinos worked on a number of projects, including *‘The Gift of Writing’*, an outreach initiative drawing together elements of kindness and compassion through hand-written messages given to theatre audiences and members of the public.

Dinos was commissioned by **Mayflower Theatre** to produce *‘Love Letters’* a text set to film celebrating the theatre’s 90th anniversary, and documented a year in the life of the theatre through blog entries, school visits, and festivals, helping new audiences to connect with words in unexpected ways.

As a final piece to celebrate the residency, Dinos produced *‘From the Deck’*, a collection of writings drawing on connections between

Southampton’s nautical history, Dinos’ family history, the Greek epic, Odysseus, and *‘behind the scenes’* activities that take place in the theatre’s community. This culminated in a pack of playing cards where each suite of cards represented a theme, the narrative of which could be read in multiple ways.

During the course of the residency, Dinos gave out 433 **Gifts of Writing to Mayflower Theatre** visitors, and connected with 20,700 people. Through all marketing and communication channels the residency engaged 162k people through direct contact and radio/print broadcasting of the project.



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# My ArtfulScribe Experience

## Stewart Taylor

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I'd always written spasmodically as the mood took me from when I was a teenager, but I started more seriously with poetry in 2011. I was probably content to stick with funny, clever doggerel pieces in the early days, but experimenting in workshops, such as the series ran by ArtfulScribe in 2012/13, gave me the confidence to write in other forms and styles.

The workshops also formed a community of writers with whom to share ideas and get feedback, and created material which fed and inspired work for the Archimedes Screw slams that ran at the same time.

I was drawn to the slams by the prospect of testing the quality of my work in front of an audience, and the professional gig with **Apples & Snakes** on offer if I was successful. Getting involved in one project usually led to involvement in another, and I went on to do other slams, most notably with **Hammer & Tongue** in Oxford (before there was a base in Southampton).



I have also regularly performed as part of the **SO: To Speak** and **Ejector Seat/ Rejector Slip** festivals, and I took part in the **Anti-Slam** in 2016, initially as part of a local heat organised by **ArtfulScribe** and then at the national final, which I somehow managed to win. I really enjoy presenting work through another persona and won the **SO: To Speak slam** in 2017 in the guise of Geoffrey Shorelove. I have also had my poetry published as part of the **One To Six** anthology for **John Hansard Gallery** and have won a place on the **Hip Yak Poetry Shack Summer School** in May.



I have since developed a solo show, **Spillage**, with theatre-maker Anna Carr and the support of **ArtfulScribe**. The show began as a poem about someone spilling coffee and their efforts to remedy the situation as a metaphor for trying to control the uncontrollable. After writing that first poem I went to an **ArtfulScribe**-organised workshop about creating a show, led by writer/director Nick Field. Its been a really stimulating and stretching experience, and has enabled me to combine my spoken word work with theatre. Prior

to getting into spoken word, I worked as a drama teacher and actor and did a course in playwriting at the Nuffield, so working on a solo show really feels like a marking point of the distance I have come.

**ArtfulScribe** has provided a focus for my development as a spoken word artist, enabling me to feel part of a wider community of writers who are there to support each other. It has offered innumerable opportunities and challenges and I think my work would be a lot poorer without its influence. I think I have got better at structuring poems and trying to imagine how it might be for someone else to hear a poem for the first time.

I think this is what comes of working in a mutually supportive group, and I think I'm more confident as a writer than I was. Organisations like **ArtfulScribe** offer the chance for aspiring writers to build confidence and experiment, to form links with other writers and most importantly to create forums where work can be shared. Surely writing is an act of communication rather than a demonstration of skill, and **ArtfulScribe** facilitates this.



Publication

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**ArtfulScribe publishes new writers and writing through a variety of platforms, including poetry chapbooks, anthologies and traditional publication. As well as print, we support writers to publish reviews, interviews, and blogs online that can lead to paid commissions.**



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