



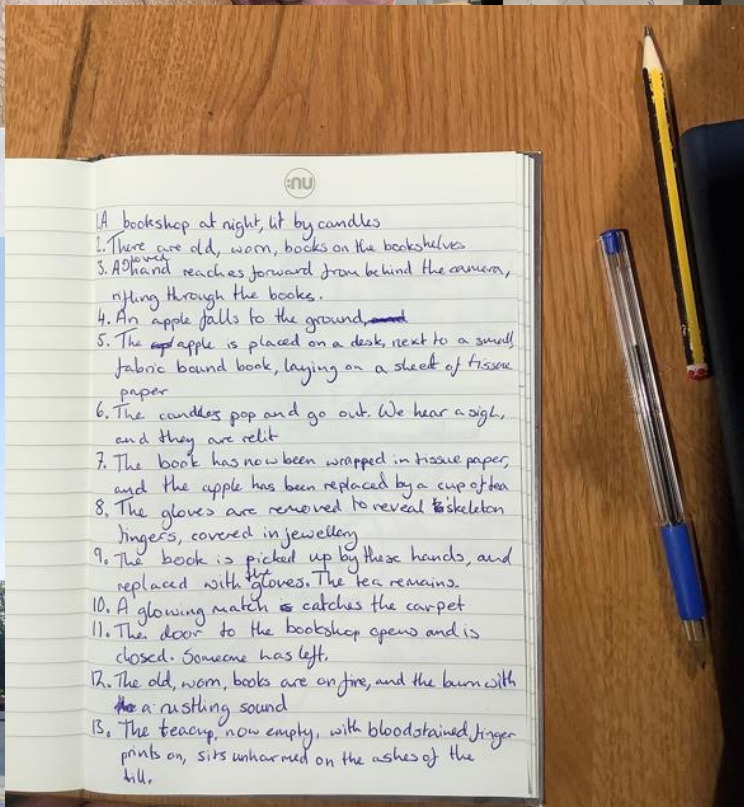
Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



Supporting

Writers

and Writing



1. A bookshop at night, lit by candles
 2. There are old, worn, books on the bookshelves
 3. A hand reaches forward from behind the camera, rifling through the books.
 4. An apple falls to the ground.
 5. The apple is placed on a desk, next to a small fabric bound book, laying on a sheet of tissue paper
 6. The candles pop and go out. We hear a sigh, and they are relit
 7. The book has now been wrapped in tissue paper, and the apple has been replaced by a cup of tea
 8. The gloves are removed to reveal skeleton fingers, covered in jewellery
 9. The book is picked up by these hands, and replaced with the tea. The tea remains
 10. A glowing match catches the carpet
 11. The door to the bookshop opens and is closed. Someone has left.
 12. The old, worn, books are on fire, and the burn with a rustling sound
 13. The teacup, now empty, with blood stained finger prints on, sits unharmed on the ashes of the bill.



artfulscribe.co.uk



Artful Scribe

SO:Write2 Evaluation

An Overview

ArtfulScribe

ArtfulScribe aims to raise the profile of writers and writing, using creative writing and live literature as a tool for empowering marginalised voices in the community, raising self-confidence and improving quality of life through developing transferable skills in creative arts that can enrich the lives of others and to show how creative writing and live literature can make a difference to ordinary lives.

SO:Write2: February 2019 – November 2021

SO:Write 2 has been a city-wide literature development initiative based in Southampton, supporting both new and developing writers, readers and audiences from grass-roots to professional levels of engagement through residencies, workshops, showcases, online groups, inter-school poetry slams, young writer groups, writing for wellbeing groups, publications, book fairs, and career and professional development sessions. The project engaged people from primary years to those in life's later stages through work with libraries, schools, and minority community groups as well as offering open-access sessions for a more general public working in partnership with some of the city's key arts organisations. During lockdown, ArtfulScribe successfully adapted by transferring its regular workshop offers online and developing new online initiatives.

Artful
Scribe

01 PROGRAMME PARTNERS

02 OUR JOURNEY

03 CAPACITY BUILDING

04 AUDIENCE REACH

The image features a large, stylized number '01' on the left side. The '0' is filled with a vertical gradient from yellow to orange. The '1' is filled with a vertical gradient from purple to pink. To the right of the '1' is a solid yellow vertical bar that extends from the top to the bottom of the page.

01

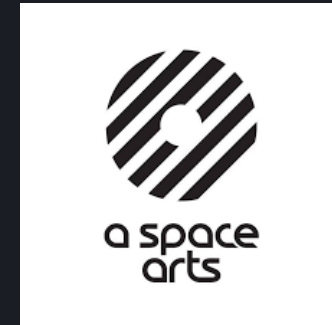
PROGRAMME PARTNERS

SO:Write2 builds on legacies established by previous ACE grants and support from other funders, enabling ArtfulScribe to form strategic partnerships with leading cultural organisations in the region that make the most of existing resources and expertise.



Developing new and existing partnerships

Over the duration of the SO:Write2 project ArtfulScribe developed new and existing partnerships with John Hansard Gallery, a space arts, Tudor House Southampton, God's House Tower, Arts Award, Write A Note, and local schools and libraries.



Project Objective:

“At a city level, this project encourages growth in Southampton's creative economy, which is currently 50% smaller than the National Average of 6%.”

Project Outcome:

ArtfulScribe became a **resident company** at MAST Mayflower Studios, a newly established multi-art form cultural hub in Southampton, working to create exceptional cultural opportunities for the region.

ArtfulScribe became a **consultation partner** of the SO25 City of Culture bid, investing in Southampton's future, representing literature development in the city.



Resident Partners
of MAST:





02

OUR JOURNEY – OVER 200 BLOGS

The ArtfulScribe website, artfulscribe.co.uk, serves as a virtual portal for writers and literature-based initiatives in the south-central region.

The blog pages act as a record of activity, both a draw for new participants and a reflection and capture of workshop content.

Since the start of project delivery in February 2019, there have been over 200 blogs published in association with SO:Write2 alone.

Digital blogs inspire and inform audiences – celebrating writers development



Promoted via ArtfulScribe's communications strategy that includes social media, newsletter and network of associated organisations.

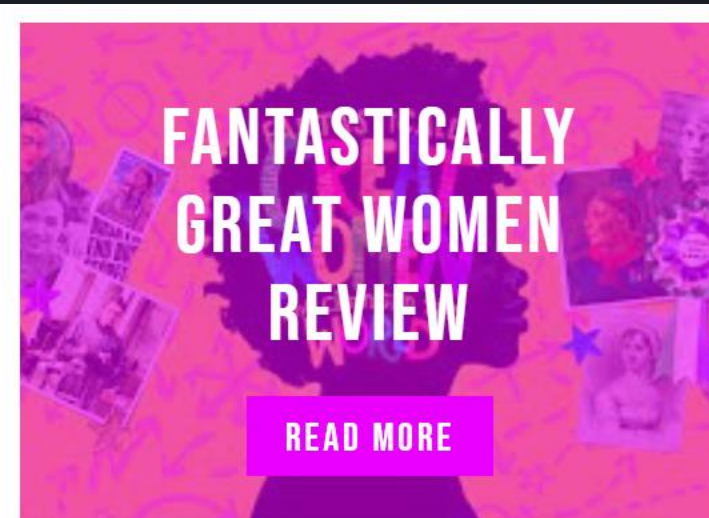
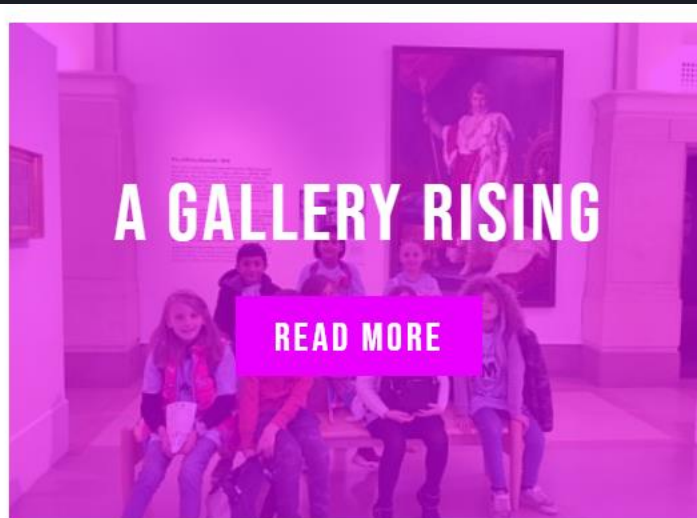
MENU

A background image of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark polka-dot top, speaking into a microphone. She is holding a piece of paper in her left hand. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

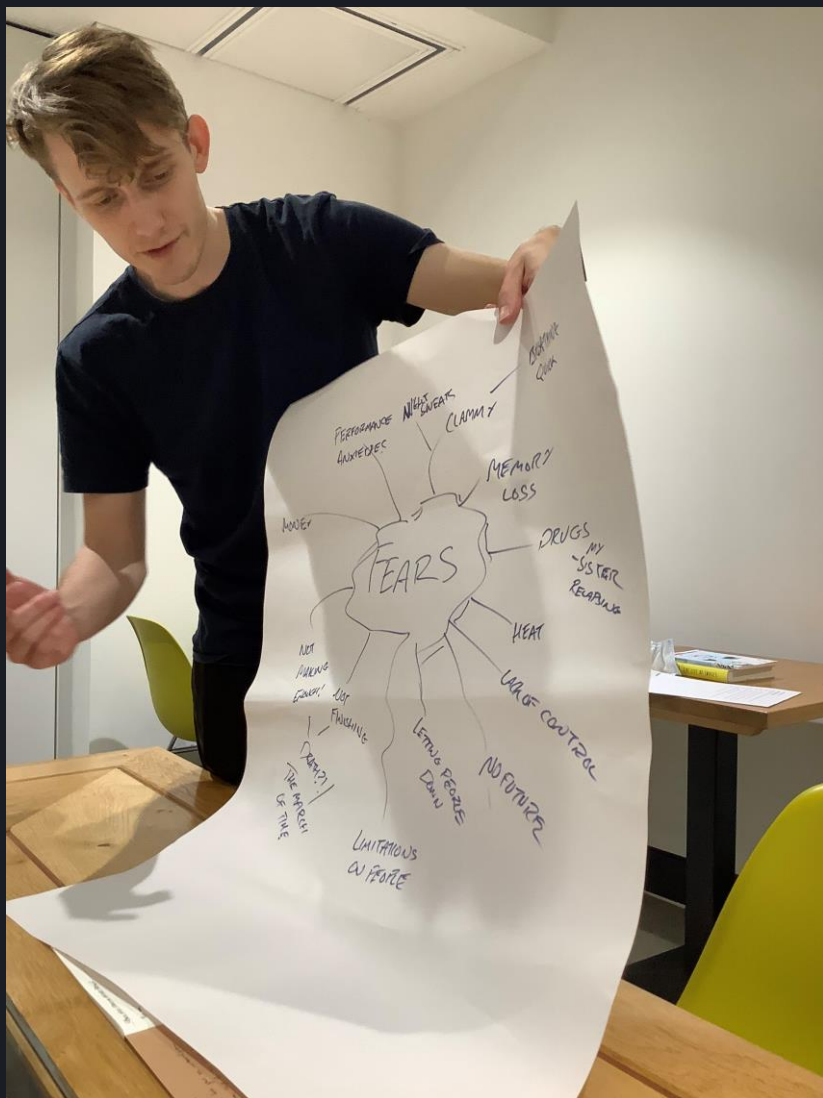
OUR BLOGS
REGULAR NEWS AND INSIGHT
FROM OUR MANY POETS,
WRITERS, EDUCATORS AND
FACILITATORS

www.artfulscribe.co.uk

Mayflower Young Writers Blogs 16 Oct - 20 Nov 2021



Crow's Nest Creative Writers Blog Extract Example



TINY PLAYS

This Tuesday's session began with the prompt to 'describe your week as collage materials' (answers ranged from hot glue to fast food receipts, with a surprising lack of glitter).

Antosh shared some short plays of his (see two below), written years ago inspired by Craig Taylor's One Million Tiny Plays about Britain. Their construction as short bursts of content reminded the group of Vine / TikTok.

We were asked to script our own tiny play by personifying two objects and thinking about their relationship with each other, which we found thought-provoking and difficult, when it came to deciding which object might be funny to put onstage.

Anna picked an object in the room – a water bottle – and wrote a dialectic between a bottle and a lid – “they're not getting on very well”.

Reintroduced to [last week's fear maps](#), we were asked to apply the same tiny-play structure as we had with the objects but to a kind of fear (heat, heights, dark), with no pressure for it to be funny, instead to naturally build any emotion out of the abstract we chose, coming up with three different skits if we could.

Libby focused on craneflies (they come when you least expect them) and Louise on claustrophobia, homing in on a new perspective for each of her separate skits. Coming up with new ideas was the biggest challenge for the group – some found a smart way forward by adapting the same joke differently a few times (to the point where it became meta).

Finally, the group revised their skits using the 'intention-ing' technique typically applied to acting, asking, 'What does each line do?'. Having identified their purposes, we could then subvert the intentions of lines to find new material.

DELIVERED PROJECTS:

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MAYFLOWER JUNIOR WRITERS

(age 7-10), Saturday mornings 9.30-11.00, MAST – Lead: Susmita Bhattacharya; Asst: Beth Mckeeman

“A boy who came into the sessions seemed not to want to be there, probably his parents had pushed him. He wouldn't engage, just huffed and puffed. However, he carried on attending. Now he is always the first to engage, he keeps emailing us his work. He is really engaging with the group. He is writing a novel. When he wouldn't write a sentence before. That is possible from joining a group and finding like-minded people.”

Susmita, Lead Facilitator



Mayflower Junior Writers on a trip to Southampton Art Gallery; November 2021
Read the blog [here](#).

Pictured: Work created at the Hands on Humanities Day session @University of Southampton.
Read the blog [here](#).



MAYFLOWER YOUNG WRITERS

(age 11-14), Saturday mornings 11:15-13:00, MAST – Lead: Susmita Bhattacharya; Asst: Beth Mckeeman

“One student who was shy and didn't want to share her work at first, had never written poetry before. After attending the group she was a finalist in the Apollo Theatre competition and has a place in the University of East Anglia. She spoke at the end of year showcase as a guest performer, so people could see her journey.”

Susmita, Lead Facilitator

Blogs for End of Year Showcases 2019 and 2020 (click to read):



Mayflower Young Writers on a tour of Mayflower Theatre; April 2019
Read the blog [here.](#)

MAYFLOWER YOUNG WRITERS

SO:Write2 Project OBJECTIVE:

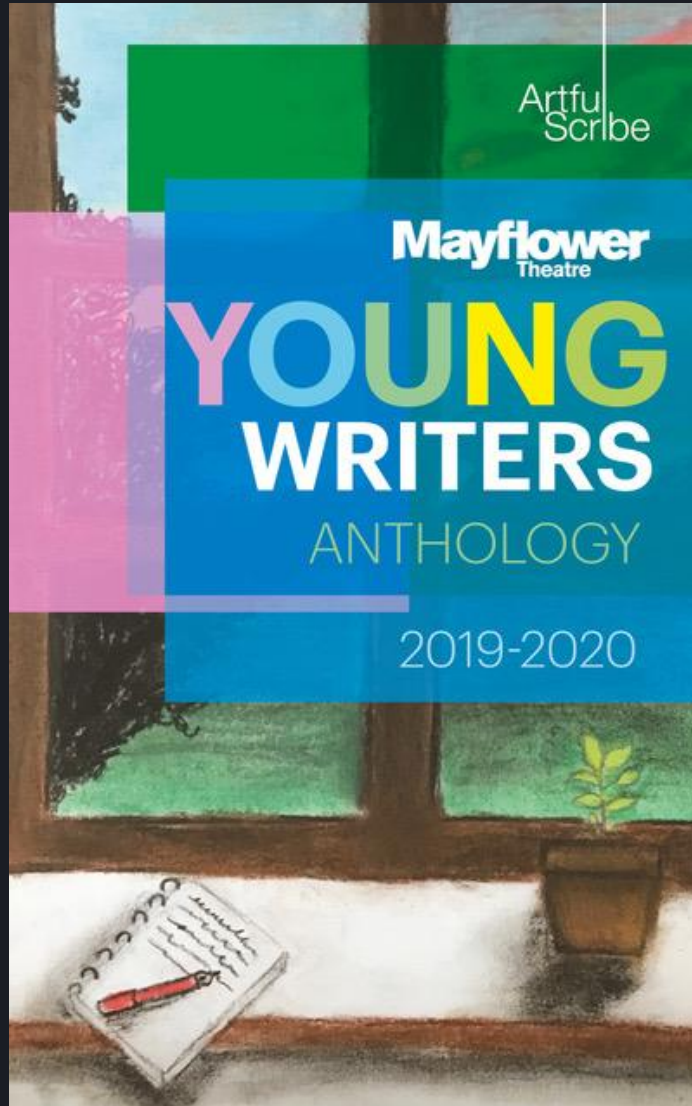
Both the 11-14 and 15-18 group will work towards an end-of-project publication.

ACHIEVED:

An anthology of work from participants of Mayflower Young Writers (at that time, 11-14 & 15-18) was published for the period 2019-20, giving young people an opportunity to see their writing in print.

"Groups like these are only as strong as the people who participate and we are very lucky to have such an incredible, resilient, not to mention talented, group of young people."

Sara Scott, Executive Director - MAST
Mayflower Studios, on the Mayflower Young Writers anthology



Taken during a Mayflower Young Writers workshop, March 2019
Read the blog [here](#).

CROW'S NEST CREATIVE WRITERS

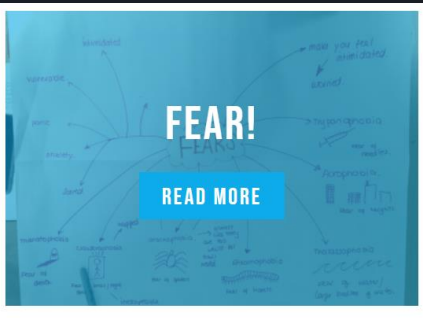
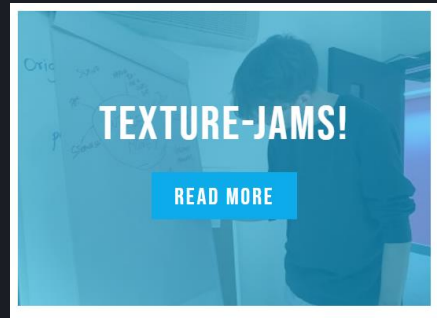
(age 15-18), Tuesday evenings 5:30-7:15, MAST – Lead: Antosh Wojcik;
Asst: Dom Green

"We are delighted that so many English Extension students have taken up this amazing opportunity to workshop their Creative Writing skills. It's been a tremendously popular experience for our aspirational writers who are likely to pursue English Literature at University." - Tom Voaden, Barton Peveril Sixth Form College

"This kind of group is a really good way to get inspiration for personal writing as the group discusses how we used the prompts and ideas to influence our own writing styles. Every week I find it easier to write based off the ideas presented and I am getting more confident in my own work." - Anna Balson, Participant of Crow's Nest Creative Writers



Click for the blog:



Read an article from Barton Peveril Sixth Form College about the offer [here.](#)

MAST COLLECTIVE

(age 19-25), Monday evenings 7:00-9:00, Online— Lead: Antosh Wojcik;
Asst: previously Matt L.T Smith

Urban Plan:
My town is actually a village. A village on an island. The weather is always windy that some days it turns storm like, otherwise there's a continuous small gusty breeze that floats. On a rare occasion however there is some sun, the kind with a chill in the air where you can only see the light but not quite feel the warmth of it just yet. My village is kind, a few local faces each hold a routine where they get up before dawn to feed horses and go on late night walks to hear the waves smash against the rocks. Some nights are like driving with the roof down if you're that rich that is, and banging out a good tune, hair dancing as the sun flashes it's rays on your cheek, with the longest stretch of golden road begging you ahead.

Other nights can be a deep aching moon that sinks your eyelids into a daze, a single streetlamp stands gawking over you. It teases as it flickers a dead orange glow, dimming in and out it's the only light for miles in one tiny circle.

Some mornings you can hear the birds nesting on the windowsill, and the linen smell of fresh laundry seeps comfortingly through the cracks of the door. In the early hours your partner rolls over and kisses you good morning as you lay content between the sheets

Urban Plan: Daylight
Time
There is no sun or moon here. Instead the sky is a flat, featureless grey. The first footprints outside separate the town from the outside world. Nonstop, the town fights to be seen.

Urban Plan #4: The Pit
In the farthest corner of the domain, past the liquidscapes

Urban Plan #3:
Everything is built upwards, as the whole city unfortunately

Civilian: An Outsider
An Outsider, an artist or past rebel who knows their in the wrong but orders to make a right. A soldier who carries a trauma and a child who carries nothing but their own feet through the harsh streets.

Civilian: Old Ronny Hook-fist
Old Ronny Hook-fist is a pirate and collector of lost Halloween

Civilian: Amanda
Amanda, 52, PTA Mum, 3rd floor

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
He came back to the demolished tracks to see once more the beaten up crashed carriages he used to board on and off, the same journey, everyday.

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
A thin sheet of crime scene plastic between me and it / falling through water in slow motion / a lake frozen thick in its nausea / cold cracking like a / jaw halfway out its socket /

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
/ the corner of the moon is cut off by the dark / cut off by the fluorescent lights glaring at Tesco express windows / shopping at midnight / alone / just to buy a coke / just to convince yourself / of something or other / just to tell yourself secrets / promises / that you'll probably break tomorrow /

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
covered in fire with just an open wardrobe

The Man with the Loud Head
was on one of his customary "walking auctions" when he no-clipped through the planet and dislodged himself the timestream. His fall - Infinite. He guesses he has been falling for years now. Though, he has no way of marking time down here. In the space between spaces, even the transmissions from inside his skull grow quieter.

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
She works from home, selling sea-glass jewellery online. It's surprisingly lucrative.

Civilian: Odd Person
Their skin is tinged the wrong colour and they stick to the edges of habitation, hoping no one spots the way their chest fails to rise and fall, not needing the breathe. But the animals never cared and so in their passably shabby clothes, tucked into seams and leaking out of holed pockets, they carry seeds and nuts, fruits and berries. A carrot perches behind their ear, like a scholars pencil. They will be more odd for that, for the kindness to the creatures around them, than for their lack of heartbeat.

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
"He must have a home. But nobody has ever seen him leave his post."

Limbo / Threshold Guardian
A many-faced Bill Murray hologram entity

Amanda, single PTA mum,
goes to the smoothie dispensary and asks for three small berry smoothies for her - absent - children, a cup of base paste for herself, and pays with a fifty. It takes the staff ten minutes to find enough change for her.

Synchronicity
Everyone thinks they have a firm grasp on how the mechanics of the pit works, until one day, instead of everything being sucked in, a man gets sucked out of the pit instead. The only onlooker swears he saw this man just sit down at the edge of it and start eating an egg and cress sandwich, but no one believes it. (I mean, really, who would)

Synchronicity: Weird Happenings Of A Town Called Padlet
Boy with Tuba falls

Synchronicity
The pit which lies comfortably close to the

This term, the MAST Collective have been collaborating on a fictional town using Padlet; track their progress by reading the blog [here](#).

SO:WRITE WOMEN GROUP

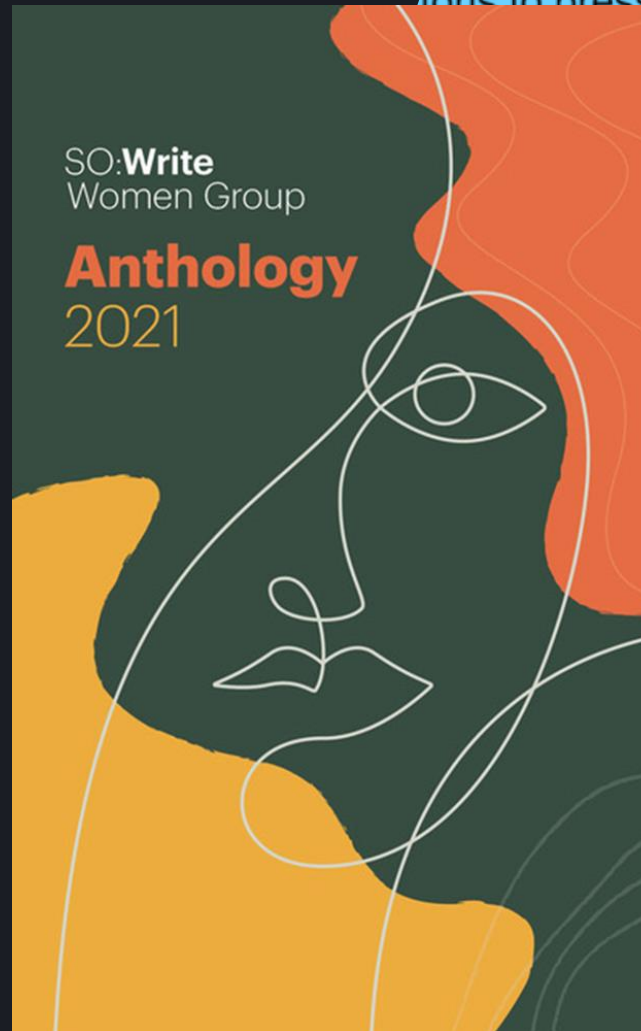
(Women) Bi-Monthly Sessions - Saturday 10-12 + Thursday 11-1, Online, Lead: Natalie Young; previously Joanna Barnard

Novelist Natalie Young leads this supportive group for women to develop skills and confidence in Creative Writing, inspiring new writing through workshop prompts, reading choices, and life experiences.

A new anthology of participants' work was produced in 2021, following a previous publication from the Women Group in 2018.

"Reading through the second anthology of work from the wonderful women in this group, I am struck by the strength of the voices and, in trying to sort the work thematically, by the variety of subjects and styles."

Joanna Barnard, Lead Facilitator - SO:Write Women Group 2019-21



...ning I woke to birds singing. I listened and I wait
...ber these days.

...woman found me. She was listening there, in the pre
...tons to press. She presses the buttons and waits.

...ide me. Everyone tells me to think. I doth
... . Anger presses me. Words tumble. More

...he lies once more. We tumble together o
...The anger is inside me. The anger isme.

...nd the lies were not words. I wait to rem

...sing. I remember the singing of the m
...me to go. I remember this feeling. I

...he woman, we'll listen to the bi

Read participant work such as Katie's via this SO:Write Women blog post [here](#).

SO:WRITE WOMEN GROUP

This is what participants have said about the sessions:

“I have begun to write regularly. I have found myself becoming more observant, noting down thoughts and ideas for stories and simply enjoying the process of following my imagination.”

“I could never have believed, when I joined the group a year or so ago, that I would have the confidence to write a story and read it aloud within a group. But, to my amazement, I did both at the first session I attended and have continued to do so.”

“Being part of the group has taught me that it’s possible to write freely, without inhibition or self-judgement, and that sharing that writing is part of what helps the group to work. I look forward to the sessions and have enjoyed each one, even when my confidence has been at a low ebb.”

“I have begun, tentatively, to think of myself as writer, and to realise that the writer’s voice I had as a child, though small and fragile, is still there and is worth listening to. I feel I have gained something, too, as an editor. I have always been respectful of, and empathetic towards, writers whose work I have edited, but I think I have gained a deeper understanding of the creative processes – and anxieties – involved in writing.”



WRITING FOR WELLBEING GROUP

(Age 16+) Fortnightly Thursdays, Online, 11-1, Lead: Joanna Barnard

SO:Write2 Project OBJECTIVE:

We will run a weekly Writing and Wellbeing course and work with University of Southampton to research impacts on creative interventions with mental health, pairing a trained psychotherapist/writer with a research student to monitor impact of creative writing on mental health.

ACHIEVED:

A successful research project and pilot for Writing for Wellbeing became the foundation of a long running closed group led by Joanna Barnard, for which there are introductory taster sessions newcomers can try out before committing to attending regularly.

The Writing for Wellbeing group are on a journey of self-discovery and reflection through words, the aim of the programme being to generate a body of work, both individually and as a group, that may be shared to encourage others to discover the impact of writing for wellbeing.

From May 2020 to November 2021, Writing for Wellbeing engaged an average of 8 participants every session.



Read the original mission statement for the Writing for Wellbeing group [here](#).

WRITING FOR WELLBEING GROUP

Below is an excerpt from evaluation of the Writing for Wellbeing pilot. Attendants twice completed a PHQ9 form in order to gauge an idea of how they were feeling mentally at the start and end of a period of workshops. The results here track positive progress in that time.

Meanwhile, Respondent 9's PHQ9 in Week 1 and Week 4 saw a positive change for nearly every question. Here is a reproduction of their full Week 1 and Week 4 results for comparison below:

I have felt happy ... Wk1: Rarely /Wk4: Often

I feel that things I do in my life are worthwhile ... Wk 1 and Wk4: Often

I am satisfied with my life ... Wk1: Rarely/ Wk4: Sometimes

I have been able to express my feelings ...Wk1: Rarely/Wk4: Often

I take steps to take care of myself ... Wk1: Sometimes/Wk4: Often

I have people I can turn to for support ... Wk1: Often/ Wk4: All the Time

I have the resources I need when things get difficult ... Wk1: Rarely/Wk4: Sometimes

I believe I have value and purpose in life ... Wk1: Rarely/Wk4: Sometimes

As you can see, in the case of Respondent 9, there is a significant improvement in almost every aspect of wellbeing mentioned in the PHQ9, which then suggests that these sessions have had a profound impact on Respondent 9 especially. We hope to reach more people like Respondent 9 in the future.



WRITING FOR WELLBEING GROUP

Participant Feedback:

“I have found these sessions to be the perfect balance of empathy and support. They have enabled me to be far more reflective of my own life experiences and the written exercises have enhanced my confidence in writing and in sharing my writing.”

“This has been a lifeline for me during lockdown. The timing of lockdown was not good for me, and it has been really important for me to maintain interactions with other people, particularly in creative activities.”

“Writing for Wellbeing has continued to be important in enabling me to commit to words some of the memories and anxieties that have troubled me throughout my life, and to acknowledge also all that is joyful in it. During this past, difficult year, the sessions have been a highlight for me, something I’ve both needed and looked forward to.”



Fortnightly online creative writing group exploring mental and emotional wellbeing, led by Joanna Barnard

About this event

Advanced: For anyone who has attended an [intro course](#) or beyond.

In a supportive and welcoming environment, we will be using poetry, prose and journal forms to explore our mental and emotional wellbeing, reflect, and find joy.

The aim of the programme is to generate a body of work, both individually and as a group, that may be shared to encourage others to discover the impact of writing for wellbeing.

WRITING FOR WELLBEING GROUP

Further Participant Feedback:

“I have continued at all times to feel safe and supported in these sessions, and I have observed a growing sense of wanting to play my part in supporting others too. Beyond the sessions, I have found myself beginning to experiment and develop as a writer, continuing to value my writing practice as part of a broader programme of self-care in which I write to make sense of, and so overcome, recurring anxieties.”

“I feel that Joanna’s skill and professionalism as a counsellor has been essential to the success of the Writing for Wellbeing initiative. A year ago I wrote this about her ability as a facilitator, and I don’t think I can put it any better now: ‘Joanna is a wonderful facilitator. As well as being a talented writer, always generous in sharing her ideas and experience, she is a highly empathetic listener to other people’s stories. She allows everyone time and space to express themselves, and highlights aspects of their work with sensitivity and warmth. She has enabled the group to become an important and cohesive community, in which all members participate equally and follow her example in sharing, listening and reflecting with kindness.’”

“I have found the sessions to be a safe and supportive space for me to explore myself and my writing ability. Joanna holds the group experience so well that I feel I can read my work with confidence and enjoy learning from and receiving feedback. I have discovered emotions, memories and aspects of myself during the course that were new to me, or I had boxed off somehow. This has been challenging at times and the support of the group and Joanna has been very important to me. I am very grateful.”

LOCKDOWN RESPONSE

SO:Write2 Project OBJECTIVE:

We will create a new weekly writer-focussed podcast to explore working in new media and extend our digital reach.

ALLOCATION:

While [a series of podcasts](#) was successfully commissioned in collaboration with University of Southampton and Winchester Poetry Festival as part of the Poetry Ambassadors scheme, the money set aside for the weekly podcast in the proposal was re-allocated during the lockdown to create two new online offers, as these were felt to be more urgently needed. These were:

JUNIOR WRITERS CLUB

(age 7-10), Wednesdays 5-6pm, Online, Lead: Susmita Bhattacharya

AFTERSCHOOL CLUB

(age 11-18), Tuesdays 5-6.30pm, Online, Lead: Tabby Hayward

The Descent - Marco Maguregi-Fleming

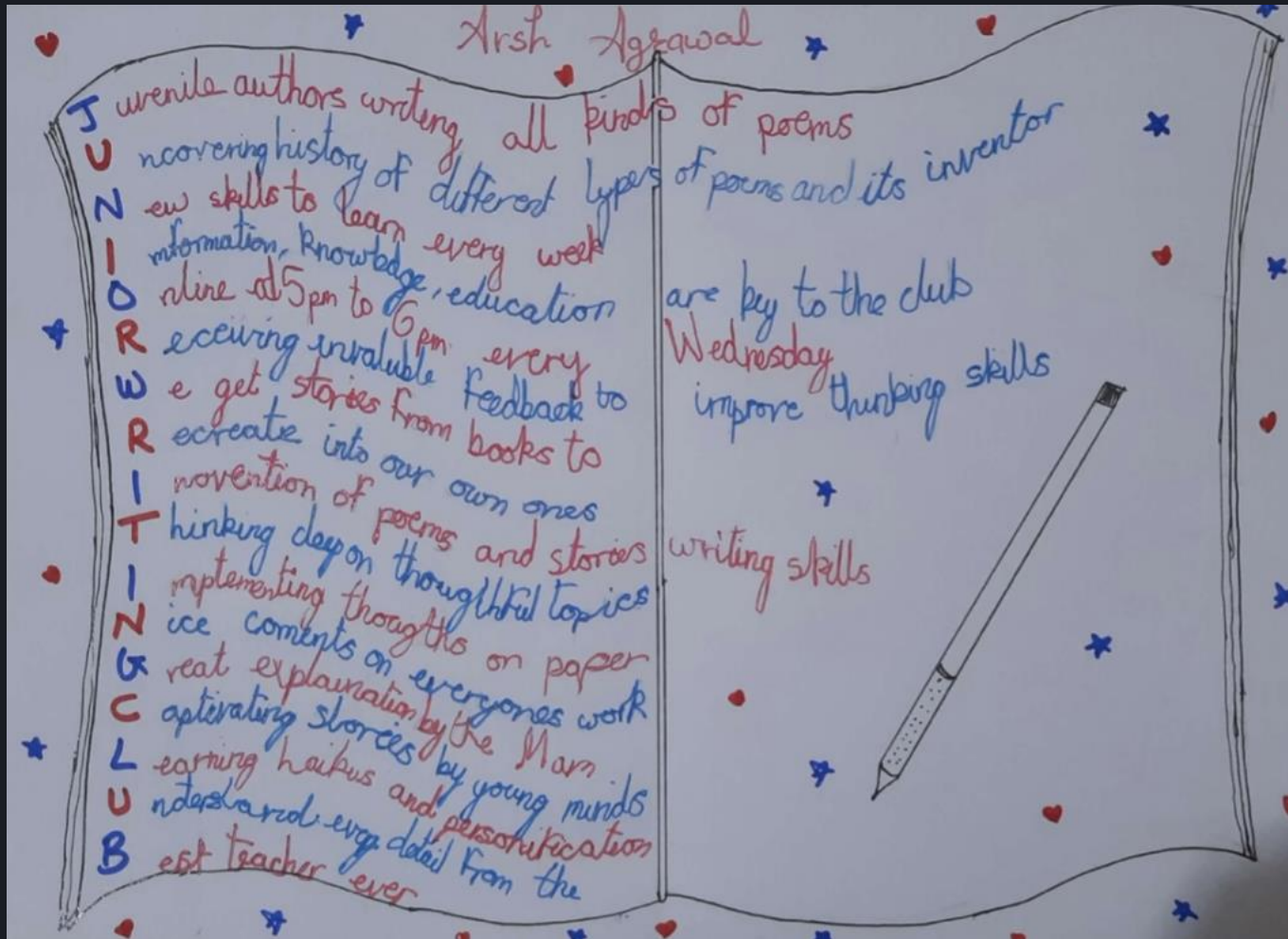
Age 9

I trembled in fear just looking over the precipice. Mom was the first one – the rest had jumped already. Three, two, one. Adrenaline rushed through me and the cliff top already

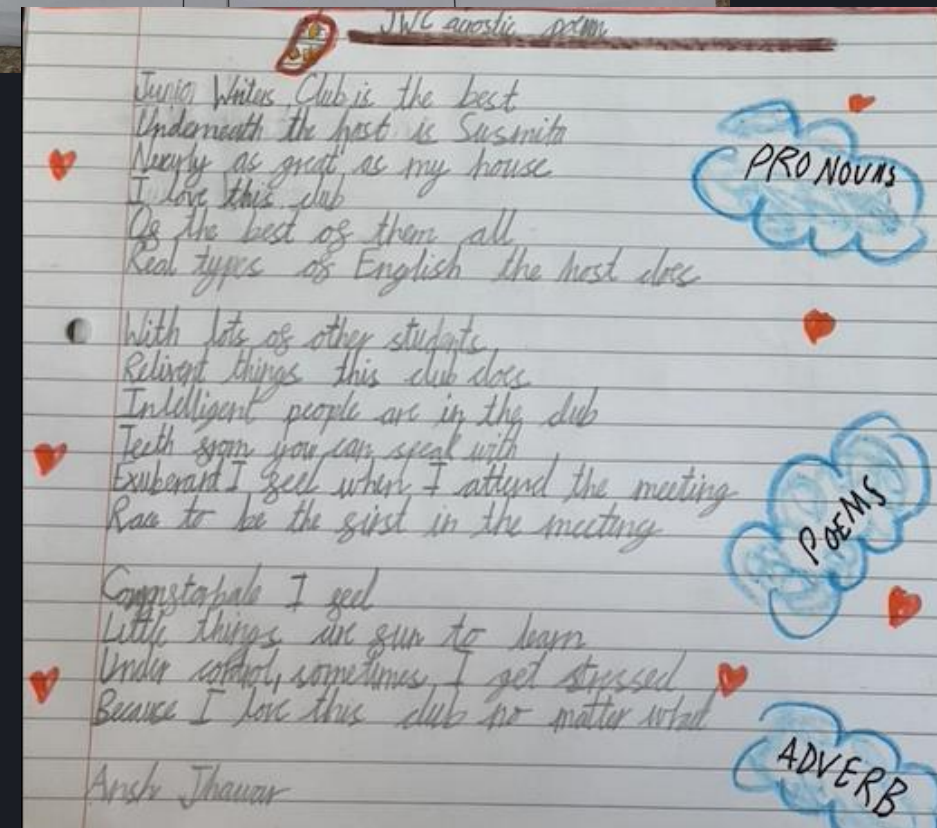
Wind blew on my face as I cracked through my barrier. The rock provided shelter from the blistering cold winds as I stepped forward. I was about to see. I got hungrier by the day and Mom said the worst time had nearly come and Mom didn't want to accept my decision. choice. The thoughts of it sent butterflies some of them were. It was a deadly silence. Dad tried to encourage me to jump. I jumped and narrowly evaded a ledge. But the sky was as an ominous black cloud and the wind was howling and

JUNIOR WRITERS CLUB

Participants were asked to write acrostics about their experience at Junior Writers Club.



J	Joyfully we join this wonderful class.	W	Writing skills are improving , improving.	C	Creative minds!
U	Useful for all of us and so much fun.	R	Relaxing	L	Lovely class and a lovely teacher.
N	Never ever boring!	I	IMPRESSIVE!	U	Uber club!
I	I feel very happy in this class.	T	Truly Awesome	B	Beyond the time to go we say bye bye see you next week.
O	Obeliant children.	E	Enthusiastic class!	Name: Parth Kabir Age: 8 years Type of poem: Acrostic Poem (On Junior Writers Club)	
R	Really exciting!	R	Refreshing.		
		S	Susmita mam is so helpful and kind.		



LIFE IN LOCKDOWN COMPETITION

In May 2020, ArtfulScribe and Mayflower Theatre invited young writers to submit personal accounts of 'life in lockdown' up to a maximum of 1000 words or 40 lines of poetry, to get their views on how lockdown had affected their daily life, the highs and lows of lockdown living, and how their thoughts and opinions had altered through changes resulting from social distancing measures.

The judges were impressed with a wide range of responses from **over 50 entrants**, and how well the submissions captured so many aspects of experience shared during the lockdown period of the Covid crisis.

19-25 Category – Judge Susmita Bhattacharya

1st Place – This is Something to Tell the Grandkids – Olivia Tuck

2nd Place – The Things I Learned While I Lived with My Grandad – Ellie Varley

3rd Place – Parnellites – Oliver Jones

15-18 Category – Judge Joanna Barnard

1st Place – A Cold Night/ A Good Night for Dancing – Kate Lucas

2nd Place – Locations (Untitled) – Honor Farley

3rd Place – Life in Lockdown – Ellie Yeoman



Competition Results

Artful
Scribe

Mayflower
Theatre

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN COMPETITION

19-25 1st Place: This Is Something To Tell The Grandkids – Olivia Tuck

Judge's Comments: *"Poignant and hard-hitting. I loved how this poem uses the negative to create such strong images of the realities of the pandemic, and the idea of how it will be regarded by those from the generations to come. A different and important perspective. Well done!"*

7-10 Winner: Neelesh Gupta – Lockdown Story of a Bicycle and a Chessboard

Judge's Comments: *"Thank you for the opportunity to read your story. It stood out to me immediately as really original, and I feel you built the voices of these characters (even though they are a bicycle and a chessboard!) as really distinct and engaging, with clever backstories, personifying them brilliantly – it's a really funny piece which also manages to address the theme in such an inspired way! I like how competitive they are with each other, mocking and pointing out each other's faults early on in the dialogue, but by the ending they realise they are both helping their owners get through Lockdown, just in different ways – it works beautifully!"*

11-14 Category - Judge Antosh Wojcik

1st Place – One Virus - Iona Mandal

2nd Place – They Just Hope - Grace Burgess

3rd Place – Merchant of Venice Rewrite - Rohini Bhattacharya

7-10 Category – 3 x winners – Tabitha Hayward

Lockdown Story of a Bicycle and a Chessboard – Neelesh Gupta

Lockdown Poem – Aaruni Bhattacharjee

We Will Smile Again – Md Shavan Safir

Competition Results

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Mayflower
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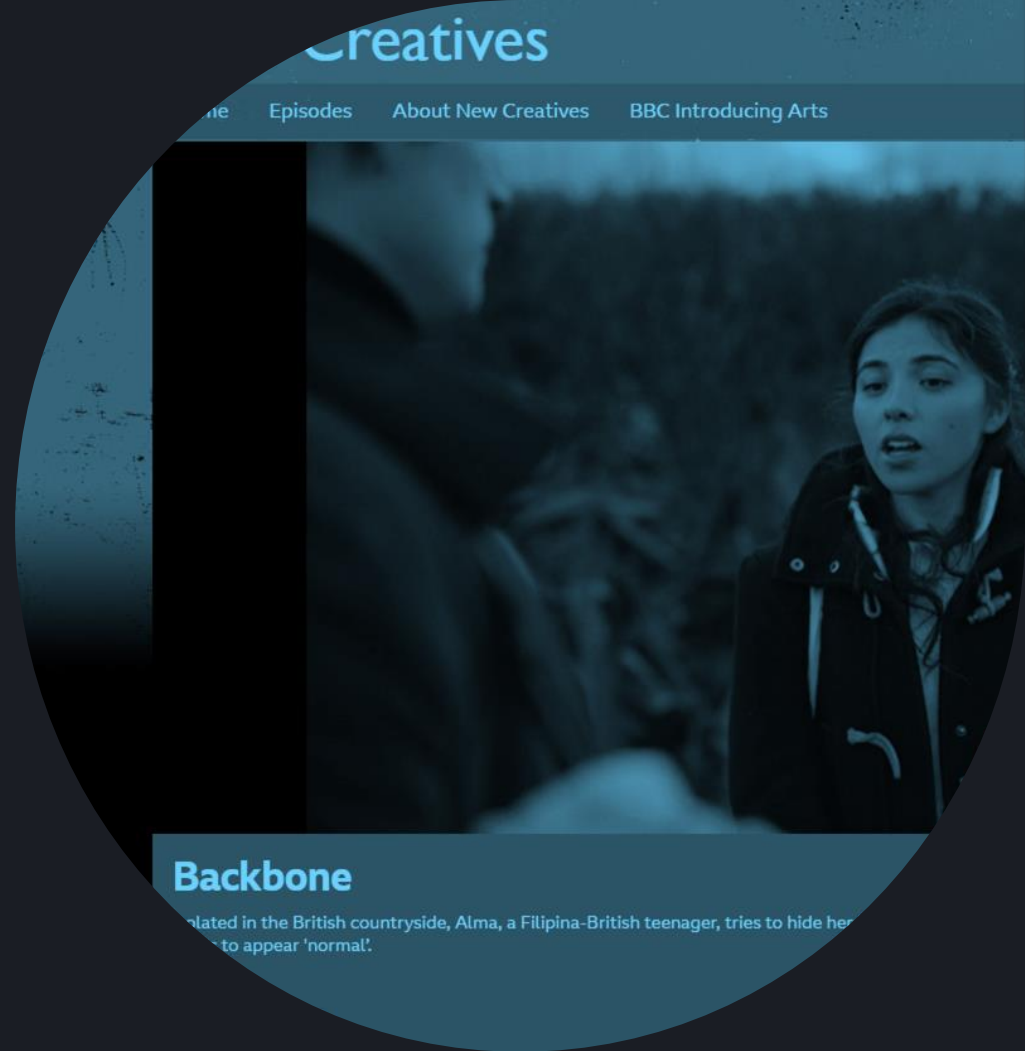
BBC NEW CREATIVES

ArtfulScribe's partnership in the BBC & Calling The Shots development scheme, New Creatives, facilitated four projects; one film through the pitch / development stage and three audio programmes through to production and delivery.

ArtfulScribe contributed script feedback & early stage project development to Xenia Glen's short film, 'Backbone' which aired on BBC 4, November 2021 and [can be viewed on the BBC website here](#).

ArtfulScribe developed and produced the audio projects: 'Of Wessex' by Saskia Black, 'Anchor' by Eve Wright & 'Relearning My Name' by Batool Zaidi and Cassie Wicks. All three audio productions have been delivered to BBC Arts and are awaiting air time.

The projects by Eve Wright, Batool Zaidi and Cassie Wicks are exceptional in that the lead creatives were all in the 15-18 age bracket at the time of production. All creatives have attained a professional credit, as writers and directors, paid ACE standard writing fees and have delivered a project to a nationally syndicated institution; The BBC. Saskia Black's project marks an important development investment in an early career (under 30) woman-led production & sound design.



Eve Wright wrote about their experience on the project [here](#).

calling the shots



POETRY PILGRIMAGE WEEKEND

A weekend of poetry workshops was held via ninety-minute Zoom sessions on the 14th and 15th November 2020, led by poets who've made their homes in England from countries including Hungary, Nigeria, The Philippines, and Poland. George Szirtes, Theresa Lola, Romalyn Ante and Bohdan Piasecki explored themes such as journeys, new beginnings, identity and belonging.



JOHN HANSARD GALLERY RESIDENCY

SO:Write2 Project OBJECTIVE:

We intend to develop our residency programme by appointing a new writer in residence at John Hansard Gallery with a view to develop a Writing about Visual Art programme.

ACHIEVED:

Poet and artist Ella Frears was chosen from a strong field of applicants for a writing residency with John Hansard Gallery. During her residency, she delivered workshops about responding to visual art to gallery staff who eventually contributed original poetry to a pull-out pamphlet within Ella's final published chapbook:

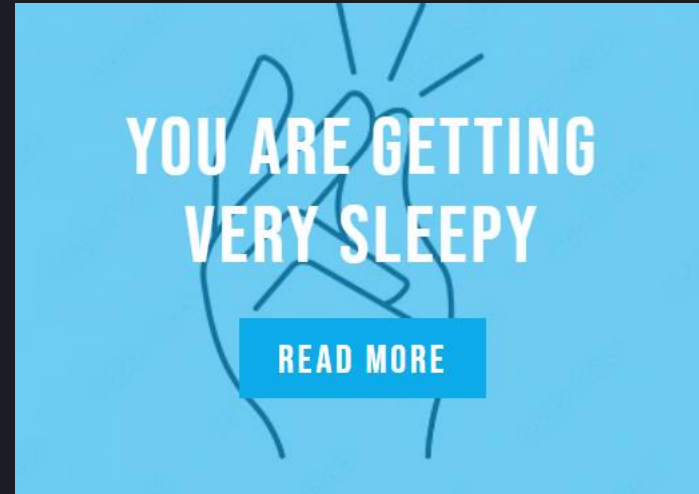
"Ella Frears' I Am The Mother Cat charts, interrogates and attempts to take stock of what will surely come to be understood as one of the most surreal and haunting periods the country has known. Written as part of a residency at John Hansard Gallery, Southampton, these poems talk of the strange absences of lockdown, the nature of work and socialisation, the urge to write and create, and what it means to look out for one another in a violent world. These ideas are shadowed, deepened, by their own opposites, deployed with wit and intelligence and Frears' subtle musicality."



**John
Hansard
Gallery**

JOHN HANSARD GALLERY RESIDENCY

Ella created blog posts for ArtfulScribe throughout her time in residence which track the creation of her collection; click to read:



POETRY AMBASSADORS

A programme supporting emerging literary talent co-founded by ArtfulScribe, Winchester Poetry Festival, and Will May from the University of Southampton.

Poetry Ambassadors offered one-to-one sessions and support and advice to three young poets from the Solent region, who were matched to established and professional writers well-placed to give them support, encouragement and feedback.

Mentoring began in January 2021 and took place online, with a mixture of one-to-one meetings and larger group sessions. The chosen poets worked towards creating a group anthology to present at Winchester Poetry Festival, and were invited to contribute to a one-day Poetry and Mentoring symposium in October 2021 held at MAST Mayflower Studios, in collaboration with ArtfulScribe and Will May from the University of Southampton.

Poetry Ambassadors

April Egan, Kaycee Hill, Eve Wright



Broken Sleep Books

POETRY AMBASSADORS

The Mentors

[Read full copy.](#)

The Poetry Ambassador mentees clearly demonstrate an eagerness to write and be consistently inspired by both their own poetry and the works of others. Assisting them on their creative journey is Aviva Dautch, Caleb Parkin and Romalyn Ante, each of whom have been assigned a poet to mentor, challenge and help to bloom.

Aviva Dautch

Dr Aviva Dautch is an acclaimed poet and academic specialising in Jewish Arts and Culture. In addition to her recent appointment as executive director of Jewish Renaissance magazine, Aviva lectures internationally, as well as working as a freelance curator and her work has appeared on BBC4's Womens Hour.

Caleb Parkin

Caleb splits his time between creating and teaching in Bristol. He won second place in the National Poetry Competition 2016 and won the Winchester Poetry Prize 2017, amongst other prizes. With an MSc in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes, Caleb spends his time teaching and mentoring others in a variety of unconventional settings.

Romalyn Ante

Originally from the Phillipines, Romalyn juggles writing poetry with her full-time job as specialist nurse practitioner. She is also the co-founder and editor of Harana Poetry, in addition to her appointment as the Poet in Residence at Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust in 2019. Since moving to England aged 16, Romalyn has gone on to win numerous poetry competitions, with her debut collection 'Antiemetic for Homesickness' being named Poetry Book of the Month by the Observer.



POETRY AMBASSADORS

The Selected Poets

[Read full copy.](#)

Of the many worthy entries and applications, April Egan, Kaycee Hill and Eve Wright shone through. These promising young poets write with such heart and soul that their passion for poetry leaps off the page and commands your attention.

April Egan

Having split her formative years between England and Australia, April is a multi award-winning young poet and member of the Young Poets Network. April is also a published author on the Poetry Society website. Regarding the mentoring process, April says 'I hope it would bring some sense of togetherness into a time where we have had to be forcibly separated'.

Kaycee Hill

Motivated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, Kaycee is determined to create her own opportunities, by sending her poems off for publication in various contemporary poetry magazines and competitions. As for her inspirations, Kaycee cites H.D, Sylvia Plath, Audre Lorde, Denise Levertov, Warsan Shire, Jenny Zhang, Olena Kaltyiak Davis, Kae Tempest, Andrea Gibson and Hollie McNish. Kaycee was a student at the University of Winchester.

Eve Wright

Self-confessed music addict, Eve believes that music and writing is a perfect combination. They embarked on their writing journey in 2019 by joining ArtfulScribe's Saturday Club and was recently selected to be a part of BBC's New Creatives Scheme, also being commended in the Foyle's Young Poet competition, 2020. Eve also enjoys the works of Ocean Vuong, Simon Armitage and Wilfred Owen.



Click the photos to read interviews taken with each poet at the start of the Poetry Ambassadors process.

POETRY AMBASSADORS

Poetry Ambassadors engaged with young poets whose work's quality is being recognised by external awards:



Dr Aviva Dautch
@AvivaDautch

So proud of [@kayceepoet](#) - a mesmerising reading of wonderful poems. Congratulations on your win and can't wait for everyone to read your [@BloodaxeBooks](#) collection in due course and find out what a fantastically talented writer you are xx

[Bloodaxe Books](#) @BloodaxeBooks · Oct 28

Winners of #JamesBerryPoetryPrize announced at stunning @NCLA_tweets reading tonight: they are #KayceeHill @marjorielotfi & @TheChronotope Yvette Siegert. Thanks to 4 other shortlisted poets, hosts @jsamlarose @munozpoems & @Natteitler @BernardineEvari See [bloodaxebooks.com/news?articleid...](#)

[Show this thread](#)



10:24 PM · Oct 28, 2021 · Twitter Web App



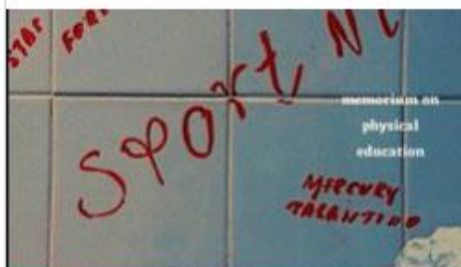
Winchester Poetry @WinPoetryFest · Jun 18

Congratulations to Poetry Ambassadors mentee April Egan on winning the [@youngpoetsnet](#) challenge for the collaborative zine 'Sportn't' [@CalebParkin](#) [@SotonEnglish](#) [@ahrcpress](#) [@Soton_SIAH](#) [@Artfulscribeuk](#) [@will_b_may](#)

[Young Poets Network](#) @youngpoetsnet · Jun 18

We are thrilled to announce the winners of our 10th anniversary challenge!

These phenomenal new works include collaborative zine Sportn't, a response to the Great Fire of London, and a poem on loss which uses the Dorset dialect. Read and watch them: [poetrysociety.org.uk/news/winners-o...](#)



assistant of Christopher Wren, helping to rebuild London after the Great Fire. He worked on designing the Monument, Royal Greenwich Observatory, St Paul's Cathedral, whose dome uses a method of construction conceived by Hooke, and Bethlem Royal Hospital." - The Monument

The fire was a swarm of locusts without stomachs.

The city was a crooked limb, broken and reset.

The fire was a butcher's knife, cutting the fat.



for your grave, thinking only of how much you loved yellow, how you'd stretch your hand to the sun in the archet, watching it settle in the grooves and galaxy of your palm. We've been having caudex weather since you went, my love, the sky is dark over the galleycoons and the chimneys still smoke, although it's supposed to be spring. I think of you *avron* in autumn, knowing somehow you're taking the bliseth off the trees, and I'm angry at you playing budy-buck with me - you were always meant to be found, eventually. *D's your turn?* you'd yell, well, tikesen boy, I'm still seeking. I only wished to tell you of the hoo-stingers I saw down by the river, their wings and the water all of the same glitter, and how the poppies to-year are redder than ever. I only wanted to tell you how you're laid anigh the place we loved, the place where all the shumms swarm the honey-zuck.

I will lean on London, and have it bend from my weight.

HANDS ON HUMANITIES DAY

ArtfulScribe ran two workshops for Hands on Humanities Day at the University of Southampton, Avenue Campus, on Saturday 20th November 2021:

- “Young Writers - Reworlding and Rewilding” led by Susmita Bhattacharya, aimed at young people aged 7 to 14 including present members of the Mayflower Junior Writers and Mayflower Young Writers groups
- “Writing for Recovery - Responding to Loss and Grief” led by Joanna Barnard, aimed at anyone aged 16+ including present members of the Writing for Wellbeing group

HANDS-ON HUMANITIES DAY

EXPLORING THE HUMAN WITHIN

  #UoSArtsHumFest

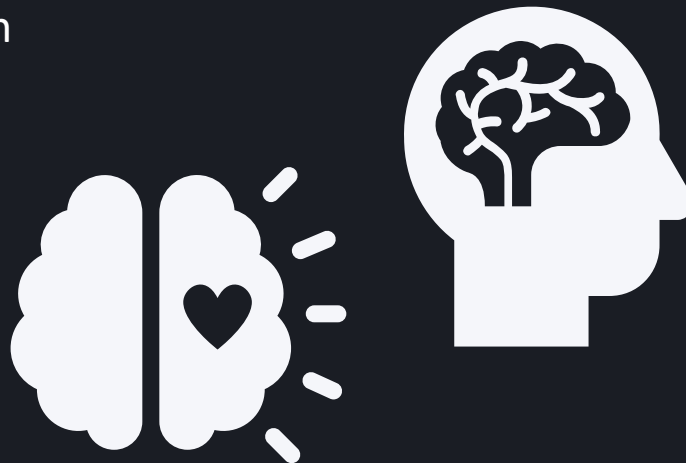
HANDS ON HUMANITIES DAY

“There was a really good turnout from both groups [7-10 & 11-14 year olds]; more than 20 turned up in total. The younger children love art and did well. It’s exciting for the groups to go out somewhere and get to see exhibitions and so on; the festival trip is worth doing again.”

- Susmita Bhattacharya; Facilitator of morning session

“A quick note to say thanks for creating and organising this course and to Joanna for giving it. Thanks also to the University for providing a perfect environment. I found the course moving and valuable - I cried.... Joanna's depth of knowledge was readily apparent and she gave the course lightly but with great sensitivity and insight ... Importantly for me, it opened a window on how to respond to loss through writing. It was also comforting and inspiring to hear other people describing their journeys.”

- A Participant of the afternoon session



Read a blog about the morning session [here](#).



03



CAPACITY BUILDING

Our workshop leaders have years of experience to share and include award-winning authors, writers with international reputations, poets whose work features in leading magazines and performance poetry professionals. We also support writers to gain workshop experience through shadowing roles.



Observations:

"I know that the young people enjoy the sessions. I have never had to tell them to put their phones away!"

Susmita Bhattacharya

Susmita Bhattacharya – Lead Facilitator Junior Writers Club, Mayflower Junior Writers & Mayflower Young Writers

Susmita Bhattacharya was born in Mumbai. Her short fiction has been widely published, been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and broadcast on BBC Radio 4. Her novel, *The Normal State of Mind*, was published in 2015 by Parthian (UK) and Bee Books (India). It was long listed for the Words to Screen Prize by the Mumbai Association of Moving Images (MAMI). She teaches contemporary fiction at Winchester University and also facilitates the Mayflower Young Writers workshops, a SO:Write project based in Southampton.

Before joining ArtfulScribe, Susmita hadn't worked with young people, so she has developed her work along many dimensions. She has created content to engage with young people. She has developed her knowledge of social media and safeguarding by attending training organised by ArtfulScribe. She has developed skills in filming herself to create content for online teaching, which she hadn't previously done. She has written flash fiction, which she hadn't done before. She has been trained to deliver Arts Awards. She attended workshops on funding and facilitation, which were helpful in expanding her practice.

"I have gained from the sense of a group encouraging each other and giving feedback. There is a Facebook group where we share work outside the workshops. There is a fantastic sense of support, which I find very useful."

Susmita finds working with young people inspiring and energising:

"For me as a practitioner, I have never come away feeling drained. It is usually the highlight of my week to be with them (the Young Writers' Groups)."

The impact on the young people is strong. 90% of the participants are from a BAME background. Parents give feedback that they didn't realise their child could write poetry or stories, and wouldn't have thought of taking them to theatres, art galleries or artists' talks. Yet the young people have gone on to be published and win competitions.



Susmita Bhattacharya – Lead Facilitator Junior Writers Club, Mayflower Junior Writers & Mayflower Young Writers

Susmita developed a funding bid for an Arts Council England project, Mayflower 400, collaborating with the ArtfulScribe Writer in Residence at Central Library in 2017, Nazneen Ahmed, and ArtfulScribe participants. The two writers work together frequently now. The project involved working with the Women's Integration Group, Black History Association, libraries and local schools to create material for an exhibition of poetry, embroidery and other artwork in the Central Library. The project also published a book. ArtfulScribe provided help in kind and Seedbed gave matched funding towards the £15,000 grant from Arts Council England. This project formed a prototype for a second project, which Susmita carried out for Art Asia in Southampton. This culminated in an exhibition in a West Quay shop, during the brief unlocking over Christmas, which had a large audience of passers-by. The project led to a sustained relationship with Art Asia.



Susmita was successful in applying with Nazneen for a third project for the British Council, which is to start a writers' collective focusing on diversity/South Asian writers.

Other impacts through ArtfulScribe are: Susmita attended a talk by the Director of Salisbury Literature Festival, which resulted in her participating in the 2019 festival. She helped organise a Writers' Day in 2020, which included workshops, talks and readings, which has further strengthened her professional network.





Antosh Wojcik– Lead Facilitator Crow’s Nest Creative Writers & MAST Collective

Antosh Wojcik is a poet, sound artist, drummer and member of the FWRDMTN creative house. His cross-disciplinary performance piece, *How To Keep Time: A Drum Solo for Dementia*, was commissioned by *Penned in the Margins* and toured the UK & internationally in 2019. He led the poetry and sound course ‘Soundtext’, for The Poetry School, 2020, which prompted writers to fuse text and sound making principles in their work. His writing has appeared in anthologies published by Bad Betty Press, *Colliding Lines* and *Nine Arches Press*.

Working with ArtfulScribe has helped Antosh build a reflective practice. “Working in this way offers me a critical framework. It allows me to reflect on things I can improve on be that time management, that is something I always have a bit of difficulty with. ArtfulScribe has always addressed that in an understanding and compassionate way, which allows to me work on it rather than feeling chastised for it. ArtfulScribe has shown me the real importance of reflecting on what goes well and what goes less well. It is invaluable in keeping afloat.”

Antosh feels his artistic practice has developed through the support of ArtfulScribe. “What is good is that ArtfulScribe doesn't believe in art being one way, so it encourages my practice, gives me space to explore different formats, it gives me a foundation that helps give purpose to the work.” Antosh describes ArtfulScribe’s support as “foundational”: “It is about frameworks they put around me as an artist, they are solid there is a centre to it.”

Observations:

“My aim is always to open up new avenues for the writer. It is about creating something new and pushing you out of your comfort zone a bit more in a safe environment. What is most important is creating the space where everything is valid even if it didn't work out.”

Antosh Wojcik



Tabitha Hayward – Lead Facilitator ArtfulScribe Afterschool Club

Tabby is a graduate from the University of Oxford with a First in English, and she writes poetry, plays and short stories. She has been published in The Missing Slate, The Oxford Magazine and The ISIS and was twice winner of the Graham Midgley Memorial Prize for Poetry in 2015 and 2017. While at university, she ran creative writing workshops for fellow students and she is currently working part time as an English tutor, teaching students across a range of age groups.

Tabitha said she has learnt a lot, mainly learning on the job: “how to hold a room; how to adapt to changing circumstances and think on my feet; how to plan and lead for different age groups; who to understand when people need more help; and how to focus on the group as well as supporting individuals; how to plan a whole scheme of work over a term or year; how to deliver sessions in person but also on Zoom.”

Working for ArtfulScribe supports Tabitha’s creative development in three ways: first, financially: “It is hard to make money as a writer. Being paid to do work close to writing buys me time to focus on my own writing.” Second, in inspiring her work: “Having ideas to help participants generate work makes me think of how I come up with ideas for my own writing. And it makes me take time to think about the exercises that would be useful to me. Third, by giving a sense of status: “When you say you are a facilitator, it sounds like a real job.”

Tabitha has learnt how to manage a group and how to have more confidence in herself: “When I started I didn't know what to expect. I felt the need to plan every detail, now I know enough to know how to change if I need to. I know nothing will throw me.”

Observations:

“Many young people, when they joined [the group], say they hate poetry, Now they actively ask for poetry. It is important feeling no one will correct your grammar or mark it.”

Tabby Hayward



Observations:

"I am looking for smiling faces, lots of contributions, people wanting to talk about what they are doing; sometimes a quiet reflective face. If everyone is writing. I love that sound of pen on paper in a group, where people are having fun but being in the zone."

Joanna Barnard

Joanna Barnard – Lead Facilitator Writing for Wellbeing; previously SO:Write Women

Joanna's first novel PRECOCIOUS won the inaugural Bath Novel Award in 2014 and was subsequently published by Ebury. Her second novel, HUSH LITTLE BABY, was published in 2017. From January 2017 to May 2021 Joanna facilitated the So:Write Women groups in Southampton. She is a qualified counsellor and also facilitates workshops on 'writing for wellbeing' at both introductory and advanced levels.

When she started, Joanna didn't expect facilitating the Women's Writing group to affect her practice, but it did: "Being around people who are also writers and interested in the same things I am interested in, participants and writers. Having those regular conversations on the craft has kept me focused. I could easily have gone fulltime into the counselling. ArtfulScribe kept me on track. In terms of the practice, it has helped me, taught me how much you can achieve in a short period of time. I run short exercises. What it has done for the participants it has done for me, which is to free me from the critical voice, led me to be more spontaneous. I know if I have only got 15 minutes, I can produce something." Joanne has produced work in the sessions that has gone on to be published or formed part of a novel. "It is two hours of practice for me as well. I had underrated what that would be like."

Joanne had always wanted to be a writer, since she was a child, but she didn't know you could be a writer in the community. "I have always written. I was published in my 30s. I thought being a writer meant having books published. I learnt that writing can be a career, combining the publishing with the workshops."



Natalie Young – Lead Facilitator SO:Write Women 2021-

Natalie Young was born in London in 1976. She studied English at Bristol University and published her first novel, *We All Ran Into the Sunlight*, in 2011 while working as the Arts and Books Editor of *Prospect Magazine*. For several years before that she bought books for serialisation in *The Times* and contributed regularly to the Books section and to the *Saturday Review*. *Season to Taste or How to Eat Your Husband* was published to great critical acclaim and commercial success in the UK in 2014 and has sold into a further seven foreign territories.

Working for ArtfulScribe has helped Natalie grow her network and her artistic practice. “Working for ArtfulScribe has helped me to grow as part of the community. Community is something I have learnt about slightly later. I relocated from South East London to Hampshire and ArtfulScribe gave me a good way to meet other writers and artists in the area.” “Working for ArtfulScribe has encourage me to be a bit braver with my work and open up to feedback. While I facilitate workshops I always try to be vulnerable. That helps me try new things in my own creative practice.” She has applied for Arts Council England funding before, but working with ArtfulScribe makes her more comfortable with that world. Natalie attended a workshop with the writer Ella Frears with the Women Writers and really benefitted from talking to another facilitator: “Being a facilitator is a continually evolving practice. It is helpful to go to workshops run by other facilitators.” “It is really inspiring. I thought she was very soft in her approach with people. I think it gives people a real lift. You don't always have to be directive, you can be gently encouraging.” Natalie definitely thinks that ArtfulScribe has created a community of writers. The Women Writers’ group has a Facebook group with more than 80 members. “It is helpful to have information on competitions and where the women can submit work. The Group gives a sense of shared endeavour, friendships are built out of it.”

Observations:

“Most women don't think they can write. They are very worried about getting it wrong and making a fool of themselves. Encouraging them to play and enjoy, that is why the free writing is so good. If you get beyond the rules the creativity comes through because you have broken down the inner critic.”

Natalie Young

04

AUDIENCE REACH

People who have benefited from SO:Write2 project activity:

759,775

AUDIENCE REACH:

	ANTICIPATED	ACTUAL
Artists and creatives or specialists	67	51
Participants	7750	8472
Audience (live)	900	1252
Audience (broadcast, on-line, inwriting)	600,000	750,000
TOTAL	608,717	759,775
Number of new products or commissions	6	14
Period of employment for artists in days	590	555
Number of performance or exhibition days	18	8
Number of session for education, training or participation	442	498

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

This work would not have been possible without the generous support from Arts Council England and the continued support from our partners, including MAST Mayflower Studios, John Hansard Gallery, a space arts, Tudor House Southampton, God's House Tower, Arts Award, Write A Note, Foyles Foundation, Winchester Poetry Festival and University of Southampton. On behalf of the writers and communities we support, thank you.



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