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Introduction

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Writing in Practice: the journal of creative writing research

Volume 5 (March 2019)

Issue Editors: Liz Cashdan, Carrie Etter and Andrew Melrose.

Introduction:

Principal Editor: Derek Neale

This volume of *Writing in Practice* offers idiosyncratic thinking and approaches at every turn. What more would you expect in a journal of creative writing research? To say that contributors' subjects and investigative strategies are linked by theme would be a lie. Yet there are tendrils, and at the very least all essays in this issue are connected by an indefatigable will to re-imagine, analyse and critique the many contexts of the creative process. Two essays take issue with conventional uses of grammatical person: Jane Alexander uses the second person to critically reflect on writing a short story in the same mode; Kirsty Gunn and Gail Low explore the possibility of a lyric essay in two first person voices that refuse to collapse into first person plural. Three articles look at antecedents: Robert Graham admits to the influence of French film, Alain Fournier and F. Scott Fitzgerald on his own novel; Gavin Goodwin examines poetics of Thomas A. Clark's public poetry. Kim Sherwood re-examines the influence of Virginia Woolf in relation to the writing of her own novel about the Holocaust.

Sally O'Reilly reveals a historical novelist's methods in writing about Aemilia Lanyer, one of the first women poets and a candidate for being Shakespeare's 'dark lady'. Moy McCrory explores the double-stranded creativity of Hans Christian Anderson, his writing and unique paper cuts. Andrew McMillan and Sarah McNicol attest to the benefits of de-centring the output-focused workshop, making it more playful and improvisational. Several articles engage in surveys, but all with very different aims. Allen Stroud scrutinizes the term catharsis in different theoretical settings but also in relation to various modern media including TV, film and games. Geraldine Bell surveys influences and edicts when writing about animals in her poetry. Eric Bronson surveys music featuring in fiction, mapping influences on his own novel's narration of ragtime jazz. Chris Westoby reviews portrayals of mental health issues, in the context of his own mental health and his own writing. Laura Tansley investigates a Mary Robison novel, linking it to Deleuzian theory and optimistically tracing the psychology of writer's block. Through the prism of poet Dai Tian, James Shea scrutinizes the Cold War developments of the University of Iowa's International Writing Program, its effect on creative writing pedagogy in Hong Kong and its unlikely links to the CIA. This issue's special feature is in the form of a novelist being asked to survey his own oeuvre. Rupert Loydell interviews Australian novelist Tim Winton, about his work and being a writer, touching on topical themes such as climate change and toxic masculinity. This is a fitting seal on the issue's illuminating journey through the labyrinths of creative and critical possibility.

The Issue Editors

Our three Issue Editors (all on the NAWHE Committee) offered patience, rigour and an expert perspective throughout. My deepest gratitude to:

Dr Liz Cashdan is a Tutor and Assessor at the Open College of the Arts (University of the Creative Arts.) She is also Poetry Editor for Jewish Renaissance.

Dr Carrie Etter is Reader in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University.

Professor Andrew Melrose is Professor of Children's Writing at The University of Winchester and occasional Editor, *Axon: Creative connections*, *Axon Capsule* (Special Issues).

Reviewers

Thank you to all our peer reviewers for their excellent support, for the quality of their analysis, and for the positive manner in which they offered their judgement and suggestions for improvement. We are always looking for more reviewers. If you are interested, please be in touch via the email address on the *Writing in Practice* webpage.

The Next Issue

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is 23rd June 2019. In Issue 5, we have again been delighted to showcase essays from Creative Writing PhD students (completed and still studying). We welcome such work, along with work from the broader field of practice, research and scholarship. Creative work itself is welcome when integral to an article. *Writing in Practice* is not Creative Writing's only peer-reviewed journal but it is one of few internationally. By reading it, submitting work to it and joining its peer review college, you are helping to enrich your subject community.

***Dr Derek Neale, Principal Editor, Writing in Practice;
Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing, The Open University***