

# Online MA in Creative Writing and New Media

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**Claudia Cragg**

Terry Gibson

*Maryse de la Giroday*

**Jo Howard**

**MARY KING**

**Toni Le Busque**

**Michael Maguire**

**Kirsty McGill**

**Chris Meade**

**Katharine Norman**

Alison Norrington

Keredy Stott

Michael Taylor

**Mags Treanor**

**RENEE TURNER**

**Janine Warren**

*Christine Wilks*

**Jan Worth**

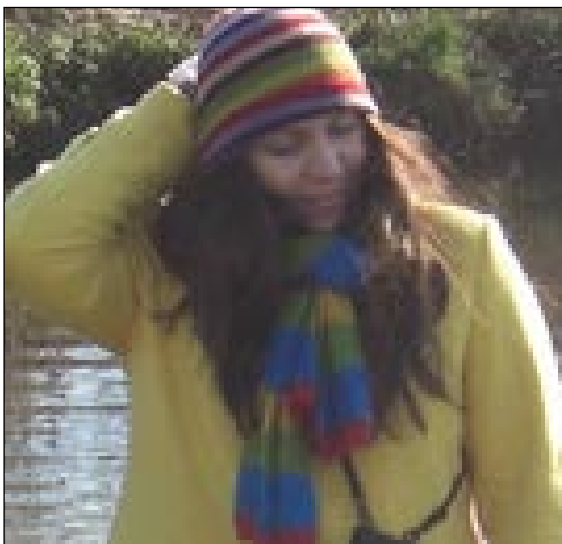
# Context and Sensibility:

# 02

## A Discussion of Work Produced by Students During the First Two Years of the Online MA in Creative Writing and New Media

*Dr Jess Laccetti*

*Dr. Jess Laccetti is a research fellow at the Institute of Creative Technologies (IOCT) at De Montfort University. She is researching issues of transdisciplinarity and quantitative differences involved with reading online. Dr. Jess Laccetti is the first ever PhD. graduate of the Institute of Creative Technologies at De Montfort University. Her thesis, *New Media Stories: Subjectivity, Feminism and Narrative Structures*, develops a theory of reading multimodality which Jess then applied to born digital fictions. Jess's fascination with multimodal fictions and narratives of all kinds is expressed in journal articles, at conferences, at her blog: <http://www.jesslaccetti.co.uk/musings.htm> and at the Production and Research in Transliteracy Research Group's site at <http://www.transliteracy.com>. Jess also interviews creative practitioners for *Furtherfield* journal and recently participated in a panel discussion on new media art at the ICA in London. When Jess isn't thinking about new media art or fictions, she's thinking about how to teach them. An exciting development is the creation of the Education Pack (the second instalment coming soon) to accompany the acclaimed new media fiction, *Inanimate Alice* by Kate Pullinger and Chris Joseph.*



The Online MA in Creative Writing and New Media at De Montfort University does not attempt to teach students a portfolio of technical skills, but to support them in the development of a new media sensibility. Part of this sensibility comes from current research into transliteracy: “the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms.”<sup>1</sup> Just as the theory of transliteracy is evolving, so too are the students’ works; the pieces described here were produced as part of the learning process and exhibit differing levels of technique, fluency and sophistication. They represent, for the most part, what can be achieved by writers who have only recently begun experimenting with new media.

The development of computers and the internet is undeniably and inextricably tied to transliterations, transformations and transmutations in the field of storytelling. New media writing requires a digital screen but includes a very wide range of work, such as hypertexts of the 1980s like Judy Malloy’s *Uncle Roger* and Michael Joyce’s *afternoon: a story*; digital installations, codework/net.writing, locative fictions, web fictions, games or interactive fiction.<sup>2</sup> Originally mostly disk-based, today it is more usually produced to be read online via computers and mobile phones, although it can also sometimes be found in large-screen installations. Some new media works are highly participatory and built for synchronous interaction while others are composed of branching options layered over a database of possibilities. Writers are inundated with a plethora of creative possibilities that shift the constituents of narrative (plot, temporality, character, setting, representation) within an instantly/infininitely transformable and reconfigurable arena, evidence of the ways in which new media technologies are making an indelible mark on the narratives of today.

If the coming together of creative writing and new media denotes a merging of theory and practise on the one hand and of technologies (writing, designing, programming) on the other, then the experiments which evolve will undoubtedly be subjective, context-aware and explorative. These are just the ingredients the MA seeks to encourage and refine. Not only are students of the course introduced to emerging media but they are reminded to be aware that they are “engaging with a world which is evolving at rapid speeds. The future of all media, not just the book, is under constant discussion.”<sup>3</sup> Authors must craft their trajectories in ways that allow the stories to coexist with their medium. As graduate Joanna Howard explains, readers still “really want a story.”<sup>4</sup>

The varied and experimental work created during the two years since the MA began in 2006 demonstrates both the diversity of the students (from backgrounds that include film, journalism, print and graphic design) and their shared desire to tackle the role of new media in their writing. Student and co-director of the Institute for the Future of the Book, Chris Meade, takes a humorous approach in “Future of the Book: A Song” where he uses images, sounds, text and rhyme to remind readers that new media writing forms part of a context including scrolls, codices, and even skin. For Meade, the unifying factor is words, whether “written in silence,” “doomed to extinction” or “e-inky,” words are transformable and transforming.<sup>5</sup> This topic of reading and writing new media fiction is also emphasised in Christine Wilks’ “Sacrificial Pen Pusher.” In this Flash-based environment readers use a fountain pen to reveal “codes, messages and memories.”<sup>6</sup> Other students have also dived into new media, learning Flash or finding online platforms with which they can

create navigable networked environments deeply informed by the visual. Projects like *The Café* by Michael Taylor with its wiki, Machinima, Second Life links and other web 2.0 applications; Mary King's *Hokkaido on Foot* with its manga-inspired documentation of the breakdown of a relationship during a walk across Japan and Michael Maguire's digital media content creation company, DIME, attest to this.

New media provides opportunities for readers to feel more closely connected with evolving stories. For Renee Turner, the prospect of creating a fiction for mobile 'phones means not only "exploit[ing] the limits of sms, mms and gps" but highlighting the platform itself "because it is an intimate medium. A mobile is in your pocket or purse. As a writer you can play with that context."<sup>7</sup> In *Yes Really*, Katharine Norman uses the "intimacy of the Inbox" to create a link between author and reader.<sup>8</sup> As the story fragments tumble into the reader's inbox, the voices of the three characters begin to intertwine the reader's own internal voice. Another piece by Christine Wilks, "Tunnel Visions," lets readers deeply zoom in to the work, spying details that are not visible from the initial distant view. With this move readers feel as though they are entering the work itself. Other students like Jan Worth and Mac Newton have allowed aspects of new media to penetrate their print writing, shifting questions and challenges apparent in one medium into another. For Worth, this means research into alternative e-learning and blended provisions for disenfranchised youth. Questions of how new media might facilitate "a new sense of self" might lead to answers for both teachers and learners.<sup>9</sup> For Newton, the concept of transliteracy has raised important parallels with the literary mode of Magical Realism. For his novel, *Raven's in Love*, which was first conceived in print, Newton is exploring how images, sounds and networked aspects might transform it into a transliterate work. For Newton, transliteracy is akin to Magical Realism, providing the opportunity to "cross cultural borders, synthesize, enhance... [to] shift parameters, perspectives and paradigms."<sup>10</sup> However different the work created during the Online MA might be, there is a shared thread connecting them: an exploration of the effects of new media on reading and writing.

An early experiment which explicitly questions and challenges the meaning of authorship is the collaboratively written world-first wikinovel: *A Million Penguins*. In February 2007 the course leaders Kate Pullinger and Sue Thomas with the MA students collaborated with Digital Publisher Jeremy Ettinghausen at Penguin Books to initiate a "global experiment in new media writing."<sup>11</sup> The students had the opportunity to manage a new media project first-hand as, over the course of a month, 1,500 contributors wrote and edited the novel together in a whirlwind of creative collaboration. The end result was a long way from being a marketable novel but as an "adventure in exploring new forms of publishing, authoring and collaboration it was ground-breaking and exciting."<sup>12</sup>

Also intent on pushing at the boundaries of narrative form is Alison Norrington. One of the first graduates of the MA, she is already established as a print author. Her most interesting new media experimentation, *Staying Single* is superficially chick-lit but deeply multimodal. Her use of the genre is quite traditional, with a generally linear narrative told via numbered chapters and chronological blog posts. A few of the chapters have links to other sites (see Chapter 58) and include font art. Readers can add comments on each chapter providing feedback or posing questions to the protagonist. One

commentator encourages other readers to keep away from married men and “have some sense” like Sophie (see Chapter 2).<sup>13</sup> However, *Staying Single* does embody a shift from “first generation” hypertext. There are words, images and sounds but the blog is not the whole story. There are also podcasts, forums, SMS, Second Life, e-mails, videos and a website. Plus Sophie, the main protagonist, uses Twitter, checks e-mail, updates her online diary and has both a Facebook and Bebo profile. This kind of work not only highlights the very necessary and active role of the reader but also brings to the fore the requirement for a different kind of literacy. Readers keeping pace with Sophie must learn to read new media technologies and the different modalities (text, image, sound) simultaneously.



Similarly exploring the crossings between media and modes is graduate Toni Le Busque. Most of her works share a thematic and filmic focus with each exploring notions of identity, responsibility and relationships through the visual. A good example of Le Busque’s hybrid merging is *Drunkalogue*, a “detailed reminiscence.”<sup>14</sup> Though set out like a book with numbered pages to turn (or rather click in this case) the filmic flow, photographic images and links to follow require this work to be read in a much more transliterate sense. With transliteracy in mind, we see the notion of reading expand to include the necessity for readers to be able to navigate the multimodality of these creative pieces. In the case of *Drunkalogue*, as with many of the works created on the MA, if the reader is unable to interpret the cropped, grainy or otherwise manipulated images and the careful placing of links and pop-ups of added or background material together with the textual renditions, then only part of the narrative will seep through.

Fig.1 Selected images of Sophie’s social media presence. *Staying Single*, Alison Norrington.

CATCH UP WITH ME ON BEBO

Please connect with me on Bebo, just click below:

<http://www.bebo.com/invite/392>

WATCH A VIDEO TO FIND OUT WHAT SOPHIE DECIDES TO DO NEXT - CLICK ON THE LINK

Sophie Dilemma

**Sophie R**

<http://singlesophieregan.bebo.com/>

COME AND TWITTER

what am I doing...






OK - realising that one mad and bad experience shouldn't steer me off my path....

111 days ago

Join my friends list at [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com)

Name: **StayingSingle Sophie**

Here are some of StayingSingle's friends on Facebook...

Jan Worth   Christy Dana   Mary King   Kate Pullinger   Tree Riesener

Message

[View Friends](#)

[Add as Friend](#)



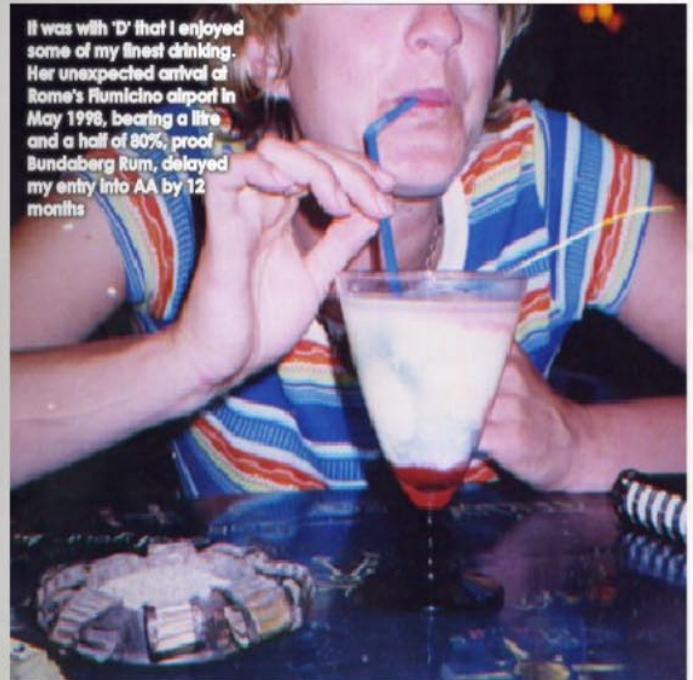
## La Capra Ignorante, 5 Robbo St, Ballarat

I hadn't seen her since Greece, and I didn't want to believe everything they were saying, so I waited until after we'd had coffee and were saying goodbye, to hand her my copy of the Big Book.

"I don't care what you do with it," I said as she began crying. "Throw it in a cupboard if you want. One day you might find it when you feel really shit and it might help."

Leaning against the bonnet of the car, her with her keys in her hand and tears dripping off her chin, me squinting into the sun with my arms crossed, we had nothing else to say. So I put my arms around her and squeezed.

66



It was with 'D' that I enjoyed some of my finest drinking. Her unexpected arrival at Rome's Fiumicino airport in May 1998, bearing a litre and a half of 80% proof Bundaberg Rum, delayed my entry into AA by 12 months

67

Fig.2 Image from *Drunkalogue*, Toni Le Busque.

Aware that readers new to this nascent form might miss key pieces in their readings, Joanna Howard, a graduate of the first year of the programme, details various trajectories for readers of *Hen Woman*. Howard gives a synopsis of the story and explains how readers can craft their paths – by choosing either thematic or chronological links. Multimodality in this fiction appears only ever as a background to the text. Images are not intended to overtake any part of the story, they simply add to it. As Howard notes on the blog accompanying *Hen Woman*: "Complexity is part of the story; it's hard to set the boundaries of 'relevant to the tale' or 'not relevant' in a linear presentation. Hypertext gives us the opportunity to suggest the whole picture: we can give the 'tell me a story' readers a straight plot line and also let discursive readers follow their interests and still find their way home."<sup>15</sup>

Likewise, Maryse de la Giroday includes instructions to her readers. At the beginning of the five-part podcast story *The Frog with the Golden Eyes* which she has made freely downloadable from her blog, we're told that the author is a "quiet" storyteller and readers are advised to raise their speaker volume. De la Giroday adds a final note of authorial guidance: "the end isn't where you think it is necessarily so please let the story finish itself."<sup>16</sup>

The concern for reader navigation through these new media fictions means an awareness of their haptically heightened interaction. In Claudia Cragg's latest political and journalistic enterprise she brings to the fore the positive role that reader interaction might play. *TwitterSuu* was created to document and raise awareness of the plight of Nobel Peace Prize winner, Aung San Suu Kyi. Using Twitter, Facebook, and other platforms, Cragg attempts to mobilise protesters by asking

readers to send messages of support to be published in print and online.

Engaging with similar social media technologies Keredy Stott's *Memory Book* parodies Facebook while challenging notions of author and reader. The anonymous main protagonist takes up a fractured position. At times she is the reader, re-living memories, at other times she is the author demanding others to "look at me, look at me."<sup>17</sup> One the one hand Stott's narrative embodies a kind of self-aestheticization fundamental to Facebook but on the other hand the self-reflexive missives: "Friends: look how popular I am" add a level of subversion, allowing the protagonist to be both author and reader at once.

Sharing this tactical approach, Mags Treanor's creative non-fiction *Dead Cool Funerals* incorporates aspects for different kinds of readers. Those more intent on simply reading the text can scroll through the various blog entries. However, transliterate readers can follow various links, examine external sites, choose their own coffin and add comments. The ability to receive immediate feedback also underpins Terry Gibson's move to the online arena. His fiction blog allows him to add excerpts of chapters, acts or scenes for the critical consumption of readers from whom Gibson requires total honesty. "I'm thick-skinned and could really use the criticism."<sup>18</sup> Somewhat differently, Kirsty McGill uses the online environment to explore the past and present of Bath's bus station. Chronicling its life before demolition and after, *Moving on from Manvers Street* allows readers to journey with McGill on her exploration of a building and the relationships and memories which underpin it. This kind of multimodal reading experience requires a reader "...who can engage with and become absorbed by a mixture of media, without feeling daunted."<sup>19</sup>

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Further highlighting the effect of the shift from offline to born-digital writing is Janine Warren's exploration of online distribution of a fanzine. As a keen writer of fanzines and other print-based works, Warren encountered numerous challenges when she began distributing her fanzine, *The Woman's Compendium of Notoriety* online as well as in print. An interesting positive concerns the issue of immediacy. Using MySpace and its "add friend" functionality, she was able to create an "almost instant connection with other writers of fanzines."<sup>20</sup> This kind of instant communication not only evades geographical constraints but "provides a means for my local community to feed back to me."<sup>21</sup> From within Warren's shifts between writing her fanzine and reading her feedback or between distributing her fanzine in the physical world and then the virtual one, transliteracy emerges not only as a reading strategy but as a writing tool. Maybe this is where future instantiations of new media writing will become refined and refer more explicitly to the code. Code here in the sense of the crafted narrative as well as the semiotics between modes and authors and readers. The suggestion here is that new media writing demands and expects its readers to perform deep, sustained and simultaneous investigations of the work in all its multimodal and coded facets to ensure adequate interpretations. As Christine Wilks puts it: "Life's mysteries are rarely uncovered by a logical, linear process of deduction. You arrive at answers, ideas, suspicions, intuitions... haphazardly in fragments. Over time you build the picture, piece by piece, until the jigsaw comes together and you start to see the pattern."<sup>22</sup>

In the unpredictable encounters between modes, between writers and readers, between narrative and new media, definitions of what literature is and how to read it will continue to be tested, worked and reworked. The results will continue to be based on hybridity, crafted from the diverse traditions of both creative writing and new media. In this sense nothing can be taken for granted in this constantly evolving world; we can only "expect the unexpected."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sue Thomas, Chris Joseph, Jessica Laccetti et al., *Transliteracy: Crossing Divides*, First Monday 12.12, 3 December 2007, 10 May 2008 <<http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2060/1908>>.

<sup>2</sup> A well known example of codework writing is Mary-Anne Breeze's own linguistic creation: mezangelle. See her website for mezangelle in practise: <<http://www.hotkey.net.au/~netwurker/>>.

<sup>3</sup> Sue Thomas and Kate Pullinger, *MA in Creative Writing and New Media Workbook 2007-8*, Online Masters in Creative Writing and New Media, De Montfort University, 2008, 30 April 2008, 1 <private url>.

<sup>4</sup> Joanna Howard, *CWNM Publication*, E-mail to Jessica Laccetti, 29 April 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Chris Meade, *Future of the Book: A Song*, The Short Tale: Little Fictions for the Long Tail and Short Attention Span, 27 November 2007, 5 May 2008, <<http://www.futureofthebookasong.blogspot.com/>>.

<sup>6</sup> Christine Wilks, *Sacrificial Pen Pusher*, crissXcross/ wilX, 28 March 2008, 5 May 2008, <<http://crissxross.net/wilx/2008/03/28/sacrificial-pen-pusher/>>.

<sup>7</sup> Renee Turner, *CWNM Publication*, E-mail to Jessica Laccetti, 6 May 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Katharine Norman, *Local Materials (There's My Stop)*, Staying Conscious, January 2008, 12 May 2008 <<http://www.stayconscious.com/writings/localmaterials.html>>.

<sup>9</sup> Jan Worth, *Wasted: A Study of Alternative E-Learning and Blended Provisions for Disenfranchised Youth*, Laboratory Research Project, MA in Creative Writing and New Media, 21 April 2008, 13 May 2008 <private URL>.

<sup>10</sup> Mac Newton, *Magical Realism and the Transliterate Novel*, Methods Module, MA in Creative Writing and New Media, 4 January 2008, 12 May 2008 <private URL>.

<sup>11</sup> *Pioneering Students Team Up with Penguin and Invite the World to Help Write the First Ever Wiki Novel*, CWNM Case Studies, Faculty of Humanities, De Montfort University, 10 May 2008 <[http://www.dmu.ac.uk/faculties/humanities/pg/ma/cwnm\\_student\\_case\\_studies.jsp](http://www.dmu.ac.uk/faculties/humanities/pg/ma/cwnm_student_case_studies.jsp)>.

<sup>12</sup> Bruce Mason, *A Million Penguins Research Report*, Institute of Creative Technology, De Montfort University, 24 April 2008, 29 April 2008, 21 <<http://www.ioct.dmu.ac.uk/projects/amillionpenguinsreport.pdf>>.

<sup>13</sup> Alison Norrington, *Chapter Two*, Staying Single, 14 April 2007, 10 May 2008 <<http://sophie-stayingsingle.blogspot.com/search/label/Chapter%20Two>>.

<sup>14</sup> Toni Le Busque, *Drunkalogue*, 30 April 2008 <<http://www.lebusque.com/dissertation/book/drunkalogue.htm>>.

<sup>15</sup> Joanna Howard, *Talking about Hypertext*, Weaving Stories, Weaving Spells, 12 July 2007, 2 May 2008 <<http://dissertation.joannahoward.net/?p=1>>.

<sup>16</sup> Maryse de la Giroday, *The Frog with the Golden Eyes*, Writing Wise, 4 January 2008, 30 April 2008, <<http://writingwise.vox.com/library/post/the-frog-with-the-golden-eyes-part-1.htm>>.

<sup>17</sup> Keredy Stott, *Memory Book*, 2008, 30 April 2008 <<http://www.keredystott.com/memorybook/me.html>>.

<sup>18</sup> Terry Gibson, *Where it All Began*, Musings, Ramblings and Occasionally some Writing, 20 October 2007, 30 April 2008 <[http://tgib567.blog.co.uk/2007/10/26/where\\_it\\_all\\_began~3199765](http://tgib567.blog.co.uk/2007/10/26/where_it_all_began~3199765)>.

began~3199765>.

<sup>19</sup> Kirsty McGill, *CWNM Publication*, E-mail to Jessica Laccetti, 02 May 2008.

<sup>20</sup> Janine Warren, *An Exploration in the Evolution of Fanzines*, Creative Writing and New Media Research Project, April 2008, 30 April 2008 <<http://notoriousfemme.googlepages.com/anexplorationintheevolutionoffanzines>>.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Christine Wilks, *Exploring Methodologies for Non-Linear Story Development*, CWNM Lab Research, April 2007, 30 April 2008 <<http://www.crissxross.net/cwnm/labresearch.html>>.

<sup>23</sup> Mason 3.

## Biography

Claudia Cragg joined *Which?*, the Consumers' Association publication in the late '70s. She worked in Hong Kong for *The South China Morning Post* (then *News International*) before moving to Tokyo as their correspondent. In Hong Kong, She was also Editorial Director of *B Magazine* and then, in Japan, editor of *Tokyo Journal*. Returning to the UK in 1987, she wrote several books on Asia including including *The New Taipans* and *The New Maharajahs*, for Random House UK. The very welcome arrival of 3 children along the way led to her present concentration on freelance work in both journalism and broadcasting though she is now threatening to abandon all in favour of New Media.

<http://108presentsforsuu.googlepages.com>,  
in conjunction with  
<http://freeaungsansuukyi.org/FASSK>,  
set up with Peter Popham of The Independent  
and Federico Ceratto

<http://ccragg123.libsyn.com>



**freesuukyi08**

John Pilger in The Guardian on Aung San Suu Kyi. Read this: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/c...>  
2 days ago from web

Burmese junta now accuses Aung San Suu Kyi's party of "inciting post-cyclone riots". Ha! Pse Twitter Suu now, reply to this and send message ... 10:26 PM May 30, 2008 from web

Surprise, surprise. Junta has extended the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi by another year. Please, please Twitter Suu -- reply to this! 03:03 PM May 27, 2008 from web

and the ASEAN diplomats who will be at hand to hear the junta's request for \$11 billion of international assistance. 07:23 PM May 23, 2008 from web

and "If General Than Shwe refuses to release her, it will be a slap on the face of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon .... 07:23 PM May 23, 2008 from web

Fat chance 07:22 PM May 23, 2008 from web

attend the intl aid conference on Sunday in Rangoon. And I can see little pink piggies flying across the horizon right now, can't you? 07:22 PM May 23, 2008 from web

If the Burmese junta were to abide by its OWN LAW, Aung San Suu Kyi would be able to ..... 07:21 PM May 23, 2008 from web

and that this is likely to be announced on Saturday, a day before the UN and Asean led donor conference is to be held in Rangoon. 07:21 PM May 23, 2008 from web

BUT sources in Burma's military establishment say, the generals are planning to renew the house arrest period for another year ... 07:20 PM May 23, 2008 from web

"But the government continues to detain her without respecting the law," Nyan Win, the NLD (opposition) spokesperson, said. 07:20 PM May 23, 2008 from web

and will complete five years of incarceration on the eve of May 24. TOMORROW!! Let her out, Buster! 07:19 PM May 23, 2008 from web

Aung San Suu Kyi has spent more than 12 of the past 18 years in detention, was last arrested and detained in May 2003 ... 07:19 PM May 23, 2008 from web

the peace of the people" can be detained for up to a maximum of five years through a restrictive order, renewable one year at a time. 07:18 PM May 23, 2008 from web

Article 10 (b) of Burma's State Protection Law 1975, a person deemed a "threat to the sovereignty and security of the State and ... 07:18 PM May 23, 2008 from web

**About**

Name freesuukyi08  
Location everywhere  
Web <http://108presentsforsuu.googlepages.com>  
Bio Campaign for Aung San Suu Kyi

**Stats**

Following	234
Followers	80
Favorites	0
Updates	286

**Following**

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## Biography

Terry Gibson began feeling the itch to write way back in college, but it wasn't until he got to University that he really began. His fiction is heavily influenced by Medieval and Renaissance work, which he studied extensively at University, but with a cheeky post-modern twist (at least, he likes to think so). At present he is, by day, DMU's Alumni Relations Co-ordinator, writing articles for magazines, websites and networking sites. By night, he writes his own fiction, usually solo, but occasionally collaborating with friends on various screen- and tele-plays. He's just started his own blog ( <http://tgib567.blog.co.uk> ) where he's included some of his solo work.



### Musings, Ramblings and Occasionally Some Writing!

The fourth chapter of my MA dissertation »

Where it all began...

by [tgib567](#) @ 2007-10-26 - 17:59:33

I'm writing this blog as an all purpose guide to what I'm thinking about at the minute. Some of it might be interesting, some of it will almost certainly be less so. There's no accounting for taste after all...

Mostly I'll be using it to showcase whatever I'm writing at the moment, as I have occasional delusions about being a writer. Please feel free to comment on anything you see on this page, good or bad. I'm thick-skinned and could really use the criticism.

I thought I'd start off by saying a little about where my writing began. It's always been heavily influenced by gothic horror and such, mainly because I spent a lot of time as a youth playing Games Workshop stuff. But when I got to college, I picked up a copy of Milton's Paradise Lost and another of Marlowe's Dr Faustus and got myself instantly hooked on the whole Christian drama of God vs Satan.

I'm not Christian, but I just find the whole subject fascinating, and it's coloured all of my literary 'career' ever since. From essays written as an under- and post-graduate (some of which is below) to my more creative endeavours. (Again, below. See if you can spot the difference 😊)

I also write on occasion with a couple of friends with a more comedic bent, so have fun with that, although the section I might post from A Farce in the Odeon might go over many people's heads, unless you happened to work at Odeon cinema Leicester about 2 years ago...

Happy reading.

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# Maryse de la Giroday 10

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## Biography

Maryse de la Giroday, a professional writer since 1991, is involved in a nanotechnology project. (Warning! Pronoun and person change ahead.) Nobody knows what it means to have a writer involved but we're working it out. I've written technical manuals, magazine articles, marketing collateral, the odd fiction piece, and more. I've been a publicist for arts groups and the BC Motorcycle Federation and been president of the board for the Edgewise Electrolit Centre (defunct). I like to keep it eclectic and everchanging.

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## Biography

I am interested in the process of Life Writing online. I have developed autobiographical and semi-autobiographical online works and am exploring the way that doing this helps the person involved make sense of their life in a way that linear writing cannot.

[http://www.joannahoward.net/jh\\_family/califtryout.htm](http://www.joannahoward.net/jh_family/califtryout.htm)

[http://www.joannahoward.net/henwoman\\_02/](http://www.joannahoward.net/henwoman_02/)  
[http://www.joannahoward.net/henwoman\\_03/index.htm](http://www.joannahoward.net/henwoman_03/index.htm)

[http://www.joannahoward.net/abigail\\_03/home.htm](http://www.joannahoward.net/abigail_03/home.htm)



Memoirs of a hard-hearted daughter

Last year I found my mother's diary of 1936 and her photo album. This evoked a web of memories.

To move through the story, click on a picture. You can also start from the [California Baby](#) page.

The collage consists of six images arranged in a grid-like fashion. Top left: A black and white photograph of a woman sitting in a chair, looking towards the camera. Top middle: A black and white wedding photograph of a couple standing together. Top right: A birth certificate for Joanna Mary, dated 1901, from Los Angeles, California. Bottom left: A painting of a woman with dark hair, wearing a red dress, looking to the side. Bottom middle: A color photograph of a white, two-story house with a balcony. Bottom right: A color photograph of a family of five, including a mother, father, and three children, standing outdoors.



## Biography

My background is as a journalist. I have worked as a reporter, photographer and editor. In recent years I have specialized as a travel writer and photographer. My work has taken me through Asia, Africa, Australia, the Middle East and Europe, as well as North and South America. I am still dreaming of going to Antarctica, so if you have an assignment there, or anywhere, just let me know. My articles and photos have appeared in various newspapers, magazine, and on websites.

Since coming to Japan in 1988, I have worked on the editorial staff of *The Japan Times*, *The Daily Yomiuri* and the *Asahi Evening News*. Now, I am studying online for an MA in Creative Writing and New Media with De Montfort University in the UK. You can contact me at [marykingmedia@gmail.com](mailto:marykingmedia@gmail.com).

<http://www.marymanga.com>



## Biography



Toni Le Busque has a background in fine art and likes mixing words and pictures using a combination of pen, paper and computer.

She is currently working on a combination of fiction and non fiction 100 word stories using *Sophie* (<http://www.sophieproject.org>), an open-source platform for writing and reading rich media documents in a networked environment, created by The Institute for the Future of the Book.

Alongside this she is working toward an exhibition of large stream of consciousness drawings (<http://www.lebusque.com/drawings/thisyear/>)

Her work can be found at <http://www.lebusque.com>





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## Biography

Michael J. Maguire (clevercelt) spent over twenty years wrestling creativity, technology, entertainment mediums and sentience. An unconventional education in electronics, engineering, theatre, programming and art combined with work and business experience in innovation, international corporations, private entrepreneurship and technology research has fashioned an individual vision spattered with experiential knowledge, a combination of contradictions and unhealthy attachments to coffee & cigarettes. Michael lives in the long grass of experimentation, speculation, prototyping, dreaming, creating and chance taking. A love of comedy, games, film, media and spirituality has meant he has never taken himself too seriously interacting with: Microsoft, MLE, SCEE, IGDA, BBC, EI, etc.

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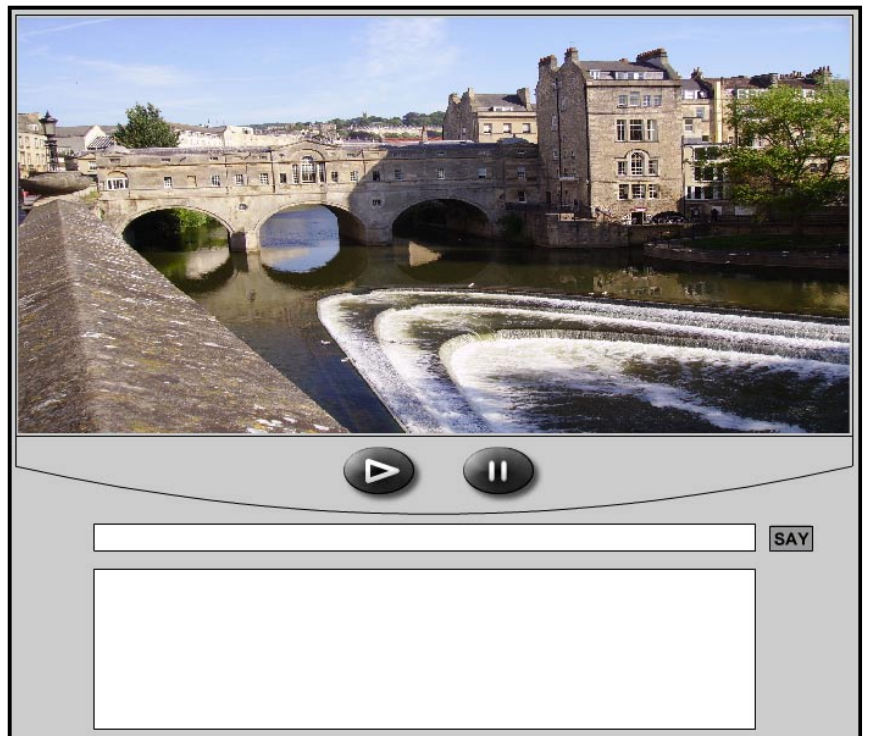


## Biography

Kirsty (aka Custard) graduated from Bath Spa University in 2004 having studied Creative Writing and Music, but never really settled to one mode or style of writing. She went on to work as an English tutor and as a tour guide on an open top bus around the World Heritage City of Bath before continuing her studies at DeMontfort University in 2006. The latter job attracted her to both oral storytelling and buses, leading her to experiment with podcast fiction and to produce the online documentary Moving On From Manvers Street (<http://www.manvers-street.com>) about the former bus station in Bath.

Her more text-based work has included two recipe books (one due to be launched shortly as an online resource) and two children's books.

Kirsty is currently working to produce an online, narrative-driven tour of Bath and blogs regularly in several locations. You can find out more about her work at <http://www.custardether.co.uk>.



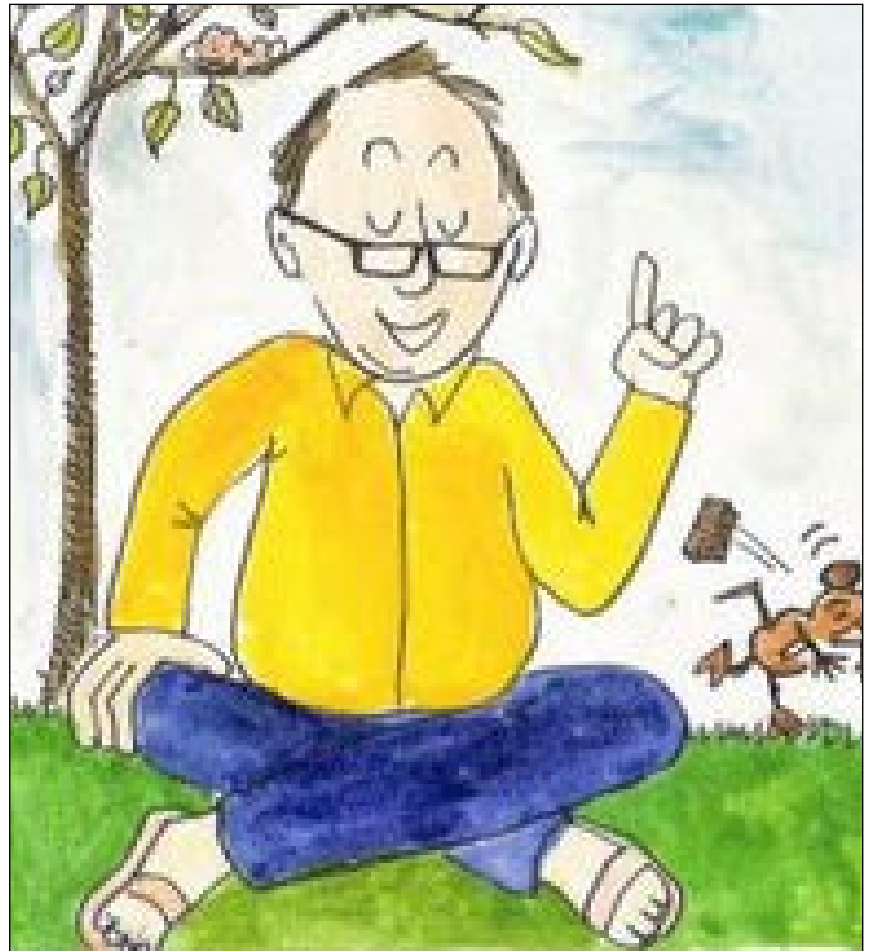
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## Biography

Chris Meade is co-Director of the Institute for the Future of the Book and was previously Director of Booktrust and The Poetry Society where he has devised and run a range of creative reading projects.

He contributes to the if:book blog, <http://www.futureofthebook.org/blog>, draws cartoons and has written for page, stage, screen and people. Go to <http://www.chrismeadeoverleaf.com> to see examples of his work.

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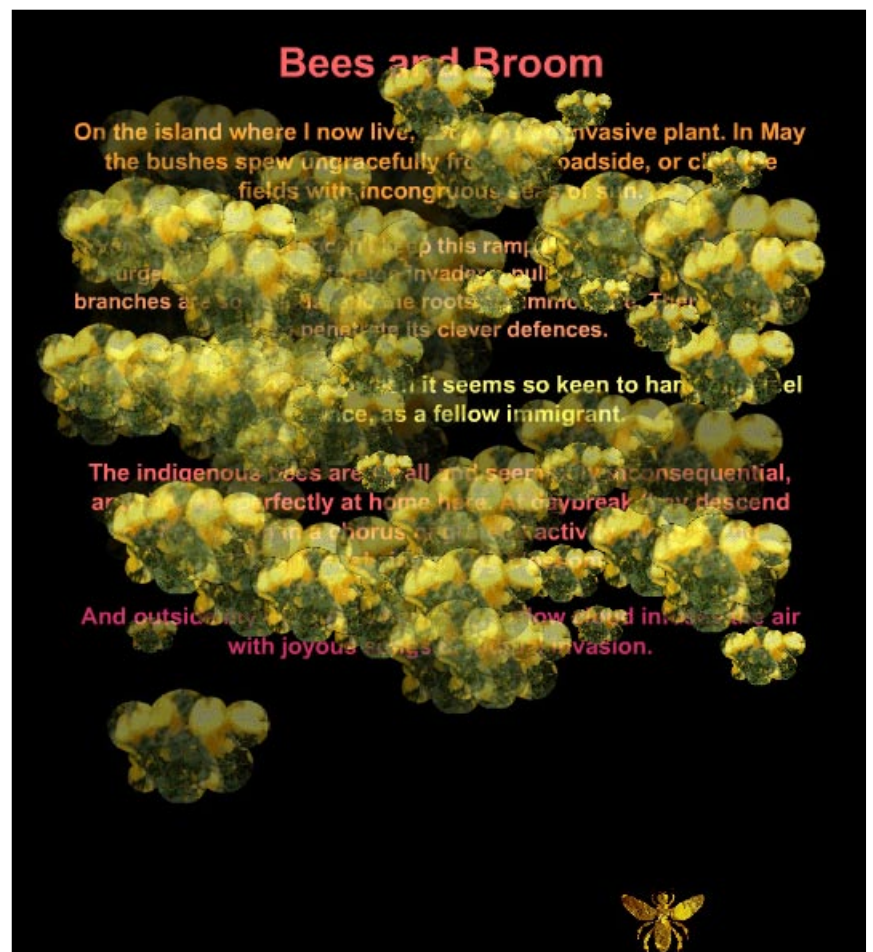
# Katharine Norman 17

## Biography

Katharine Norman originally trained as a composer and computer music specialist, and until 2003 taught at Goldsmiths, University of London. After emigrating to a small island off the British Columbia coast she switched to freelance writing and composition, and made her living by writing encyclopedia entries, high school texts, and National Trust handbooks (producing limpid prose on English gardens while watching deer go past one way, bald eagles the other). She also wrote *Sounding Art: Eight Literary Excursions through Electronic Music* (Ashgate, 2004) which, as her publisher realized too late, is not really about music. She is currently back in England, keeping sanity at bay by working on her Flash skills and her first new media novel.. More information on her writing, new media and music at <http://www.novamara.com>.

<http://www.novamara.com>

<http://www.stayconscious.com>





## Biography

Alison is a bestselling author of three novels - *Class Act* (2003), *Look Before You Leap* (2004), *Three of a Kind* (2005), contributor to two anthologies - *Thirty & Fabulous* (2006) and *Party Animal* (2007), and writer of two short comedy dramas *A Fish & A Bonsai* (2004) and *Pistols at Dawn* (2007).

A recent graduate of the Online MA, Alison wrote *Staying Single* for her dissertation as a cross-media work of fictional blogging. She has just finished her fourth fiction novel - *The Love Boat* - and is working on her second contemporary novel, *I Love NY*.

<http://www.alisonnorrington.com>

<http://sophie-stayingsingle.blogspot.com>



## STAYING SINGLE

DUMPED AGAIN? ME? NO WAY! READ THE STORY OF SOPHIE REGAN AND HOW SHE MADE THE TOUGH DECISION TO REMAIN SINGLE FOR AN ENTIRE YEAR - AND HOW THIS LED HER STRAIGHT INTO A MEDIA SPIN, RICHARD & JUDY'S SOFA, AND ULTIMATELY - TO THE MAN OF HER DREAMS... OR NOT .... ?

MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2008

### Chapter Sixty Seven - don't crack your cheekbones

Fake smiles.  
Canned laughter.  
Forced hilarity.  
It's all bullshit.

And that's what this date is going to be.

The last thing I want to be doing tonight is going out with a comedian. The 'funny guy'. Like salt in the wound his cheesy grin and slapstick crap is just going to make me feel worse. In the shadow of the Ade fiasco this is painful.

Jonny Kowlowski? Never heard of him. He's an 'up-and-coming' comedian. Whatever that means. And so I'm standing, trying to take deep breaths of the stinging, cold night air as I brace myself outside Circus Space.

OK.

I'm going in.

I spot him immediately. The wiry guy standing by the crash mats, hands on hips as he guffaws whilst dropping 3 juggling balls.

Idiot.

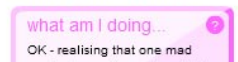
SOPHIE.....



### NEW TO STAYING SINGLE???

To catch up quickly on the story so far just email Sophie at [singlesophieregan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:singlesophieregan@yahoo.co.uk) for chapters from the very start. It's like a book, but sent by email. And it's **FREE!!** So, what are you waiting for? Alternatively click **here to start at the very beginning!!!**

### COME AND TWITTER





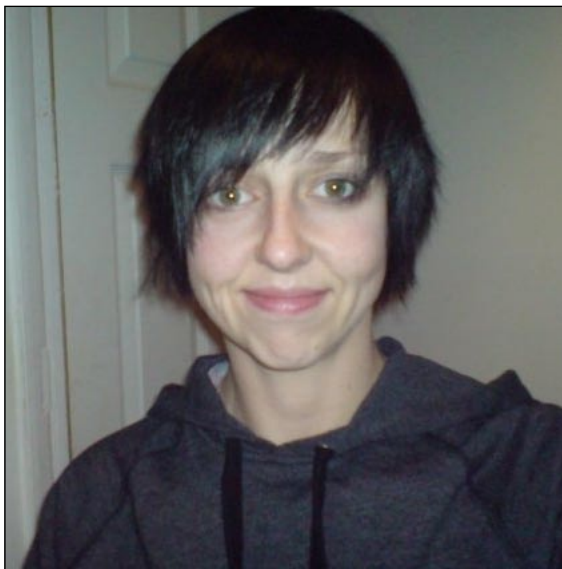
## Biography

Keredy Stott works within the communications sphere and describes herself as a professional volunteer. She is editor and writer for a local music magazine, *Northampton Music UK*, and also assists with the design of the free print publication. Additionally she runs a myspace page, *Northampton Back on the Map*, which provides live music listings in her home town. Her academic background is in literature and her interests include speculative-fiction, identity, memory and its representation, multi-narrative techniques and metafiction. Her online creative work can be found at <http://www.keredystott.com>.

<http://www.northamptonmusicuk.com>

<http://www.myspace.com/northamptonbackonthemap>

<http://www.keredystott.com>



**This is Northampton's Music Revolution Solution.**  
It is dedicated to all the musos who come and play in our town and I'll think you'll be surprised at how much there is on offer.

Our aim is to list the artists' myspace pages and map the venues so you will hopefully mosey on down to listen to them live.

Unfortunately there isn't enough time in the day for us to search out every wee gigitte that's happening, so if you know something we don't give us a hand by emailing details **ALONG WITH THE MYSPACE URL** and we can have them listed asap.

Also use the comment space to plug yourself (within reason) and you gorgeous people of Northampton can post up who you saw, who you rate and who you desperately wish were coming here.

Northampton Back on the Map wants to hear from you. Do you have ears? Yes?! Really?! Well then, who'do you want to play in our up and coming town?

Are you a band or artist who would like to play in the town and therefore contribute to the start of something special?

Please get in touch! The 'Back on the Map' project starts here so established and potential venues alike, c'mon,

**FLYERS**  
the man who should receive up the curtain  
brings an eclectic mix of music  
and visuals from his music videos  
of the clubby the 1980s big audio evolution  
to the picture-dome on 23rd may 2008

**FREE LOVE FRIDAY**  
free entry free love chispears  
Nerve Sam  
alternate Fridays  
@ libbiok  
24 Cavell Street  
01604 604027  
info@libbiokclub.com

**NORTHAMPTON MUSIC**  
GUTWORD  
DANNY CONNORS  
THAT'S ALL FOLK  
ISSUE THREE OUT NOW!!

**BALLROOM**  
1970-1979  
THE NEW RENAISSANCE  
Sat 16th Feb - Sat 22nd  
Sat 26th April - Sat 17th  
Sat 21st June - Sat 19th

Northampton Back on the Map has 1249 billion friends.

**Northampton Music UK .com**  
The Organized  
The Organized

**Oxjam Northampton**  
Myanmar (Burma)  
Cyclone Appeal  
TO MAKE A DONATION  
0870 60 60 900

**Closed Captioned Records?**  
HONKEY FINGER

**The Broken Shackle Tabernacle**  
HONKEY FINGER

**DONT FORGET! MESSAGE US WITH YOUR EVENT AND MYSPACE URL**

# Michael Taylor 20

## Biography

Michael comes to writing and New Media after 40 years spent working in the UK, Africa, Arabia, India, western Europe and the USA. He writes some fiction but is primarily concerned with commenting on/projecting ideas about economics, politics, history and social affairs. His blog is at: [http://my.telegraph.co.uk/Casus\\_Belli](http://my.telegraph.co.uk/Casus_Belli). With an established BPO business, his current project is *thecafe*, an online magazine, being developed to serve "niche groups" offering tools and facilities; wiki, Machinima, second life, blogs and the Personal Assistant to help folk make best use of these facilities, especially collaborative projects that promote understanding between peoples through the free expression of ideas and information.

The screenshot shows the homepage of theCafe website. The header features the site's logo and a navigation menu with links: Home, Careers With Us, Cafe Society, Great Jobs & Assignments, Opinion, About us, and Contact us. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column contains links to 'Home Thoughts', 'myFuture', 'Image Gallery', and 'europe'. The middle column features a large yellow box titled 'The Editor Welcomes you to theCafe!' with a welcome message and a 'What's New' section. The right column contains a 'Notice Board' and several smaller boxes for 'theGallery', 'Writers' Bloc', 'Michael @ Writer's Den', 'Shena myStudio', 'theMall', 'theCafe Society', and 'Sales & Marketing'. The footer of the website is not visible in the screenshot.

theCafe's theCafe

Home Careers With Us Cafe Society Great Jobs & Assignments Opinion About us Contact us

Feedback: Creativity, Views, Suggestions

Home Thoughts  
► Home Thoughts ►  
Interiors ► Gardens

myFuture  
► Jobs ► Head Hunting  
Services

Forum  
Debating Forum

Image Gallery

CAREER  
INTERVIEW

europe  
Interviews  
Interviews  
Interviews

The Editor Welcomes you to theCafe!

Back in the 1980's a small group of researchers, recruiters and advisors produced a series of A4 sheets printed in black and white which they called "Opportunity" because it presented job and retraining opportunities for people who needed them. In those days there were lots of such people across industry and the Armed Forces.

This edition went on to serve programmes that we were managing in partnership with NGO's, the Public and Private sectors in most of the major industrialised regions of the UK, which were going through the 'Thatcher' and 'post Thatcher' restructuring. More than 200,000 were involved, many of them 'women returners' and people from ethnic minorities as well as those with skills acquired in a different age with different markets and products.

Even then we looked at the issues holistically - from retraining to realigning lives, seeking to help folk release ambitions, often creatively inspired, that had often been sublimated by the pressures of Life. From full page broadsheet and colour editions to full colour tabloid, theCafe finally emerged - like a butterfly - as the on-line version of our old friend.

The economy moves on, the world moves on and, today, marks the beginning of a new evolution for theCafe and its team as we turn our attention to "creators" and creativity - an increasingly important part of our lives - and high tech creativity and services become ever more central to the economy.

What's New

theCafe "Tool box", the Personal Assistant and a Creative Help Desk.

As you know, In the defence sector, aircraft, tanks and ships become platforms on which to base complex systems and instruments ready for people to operate and work together to complete complicated tasks.

We begin the transformation and development of theCafe to make it a platform where our teams will help 'Creators' - Artists, Writers, Designers, and others - present and develop their output - individual and collaborative and get it to market. We will give you some of the elements of social networking sites but dedicated to supporting collaborative creative projects especially by providing for you a "creative help desk" and a "tool box" containing elements of new media that can be used as they come on line and that readily adapt to the "semantic web".

At the same time we recognise that many of the social networking sites, it is feared by users, might sell out by changing their objectives and perhaps the ways that information is used. We, at theCafe, are developing a new business model which, we hope, will engender meaningful relationships between theCafe and theCafe Society - whose members and

Notice Board

theGallery

Writers' Bloc

Michael @  
Writer's Den

Shena  
myStudio

theMall

theCafe Society  
Read More

Sales & Marketing  
Read More

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## Biography

Mags Treanor is a fiction writer and poet, based in the West of Ireland. Her work has been published in numerous anthologies, broadcast on RTE radio and her first collection of short stories and poetry was published by Maverick Press in 2007.

This year Mags has been selected for the Poetry Ireland 'Introduction to Poetry' series. Probably best known for her entertaining performance pieces, Mags is no stranger to Slam Poetry, and represented Connacht in the BBC4 All Island Poetry Slam in 2007. She has been three times winner of the North Beach Nights Poetry Slam and she was a runner-up at the Midnight Slam, at the 'In Search of Raftery' festival in 2007. In 2008 she won the NUIG Slam Championship.

Currently, Mags travels throughout Ireland performing her work and facilitating workshops in order to enable secondary school students learn to write and perform slam poetry in the run up to Ireland's first 'YouthSpeaks' all Island Slam Championship which will take place during the Cuirt International Festival of Literature this April in Galway.



Further to this, Mags is currently completing an M.A. in Creative Writing & New Media with the De Montfort University of Leicester. In her free time Mags single handedly raises her three children, works as a business consultant and runs marathons.

<http://www.magstreanor.com>



## Biography

Renee Turner is an American artist/writer based in the Netherlands. She has an interest in the performative space of the web and its impact on narration. She has been a guest on *Empyre*, written for *Metropolis M* and was a part of the international editorial team of *The Next 5 Minutes*. Along with Riek Sijbring and Femke Snelting, she is a member of the art/design collective, De Geuzen: a foundation for multi-visual research. For the past decade, the group has deployed a variety of tactics on and offline to explore their interests in female identity, critical resistance, representation, and narrative web-archiving. The group has done educational workshops at Konstfack (Stockholm) and The Piet Zwart Institute (Rotterdam), and their work has been featured in *Manifesta 3* (Ljubljana), the Royal College (London), *Rhizome*, (Artbase), *Internet Art* by Rachel Greene and *Mute Magazine*.

### Fudge the Facts:

<http://www.fudgethefacts.com>

### De Geuzen: a foundation for multi-visual research

<http://www.geuzen.org>



# Janine Warren 23

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## Biography

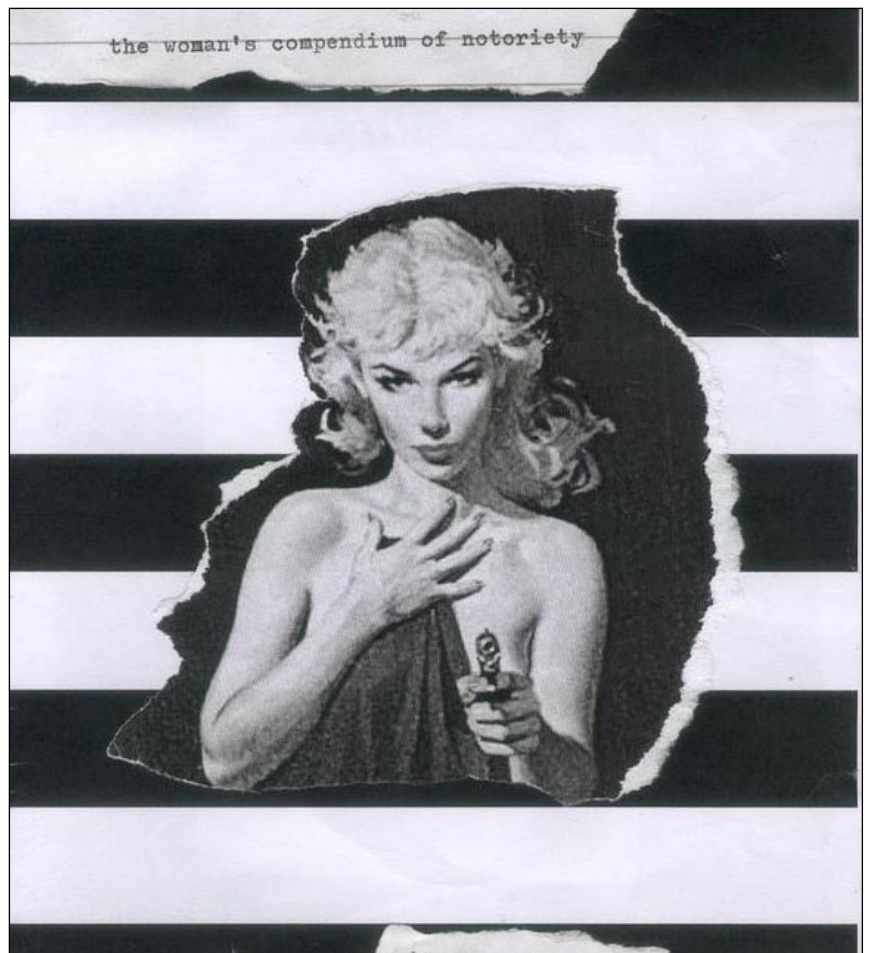
Janine Warren works as a publicist for rock n roll musicians and writes for a variety of music publications including *Mojo*, *Incendiary Magazine* and *Loud and Quiet*. She also produces her own cut and paste fanzine called *The Woman's Compendium of Notoriety*. Janine is currently saving up her ration coupons for a black crepe dress like the one Edith Piaf wore on Broadway in January 1948 and blames The Royal Mail for the death of Tony Hancock.

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<http://www.janinewarren.co.uk>

<http://www.myspace.com/notoriousfemme>

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## Biography

Christine Wilks - aka crisscross [<http://www.crisscross.net>] - is a new media writer and artist, creating rich media works for the web. She is a regular contributor to the remix [[http://www.runran.net/remix\\_runran](http://www.runran.net/remix_runran)] , an international collaborative blog of remixed media art and writing, and is one of the core group from the remix to create and present the *Devil's Rope Journal* [[http://cfisrv.finearts.uvic.ca/interactivefutures/IF07/?page\\_id=49](http://cfisrv.finearts.uvic.ca/interactivefutures/IF07/?page_id=49)] at *Interactive Futures 2007* in BC, Canada. In the UK she has given live performances, combining digital media with the spoken word, at venues including Ilkley Literature Festival and Sheffield's Off the Shelf Festival. Starting out as an artist film-maker, she produced short films, animations and video installations, and went on to write fiction and screenplays. As a freelancer, she develops e-learning content and teaches creative media workshops.



**crisscross:**

<http://www.crisscross.net>

**download Tailspin, my latest interactive fiction:  
Tailspin for PC:**

[http://www.crisscross.net/WorksinProgress/Tailspin\\_for\\_PC.exe.zip](http://www.crisscross.net/WorksinProgress/Tailspin_for_PC.exe.zip)

**Tailspin for Mac:**

[http://www.crisscross.net/WorksinProgress/Tailspin\\_for\\_Mac.app.sitx](http://www.crisscross.net/WorksinProgress/Tailspin_for_Mac.app.sitx)

**crissXross/wilX (blog):**

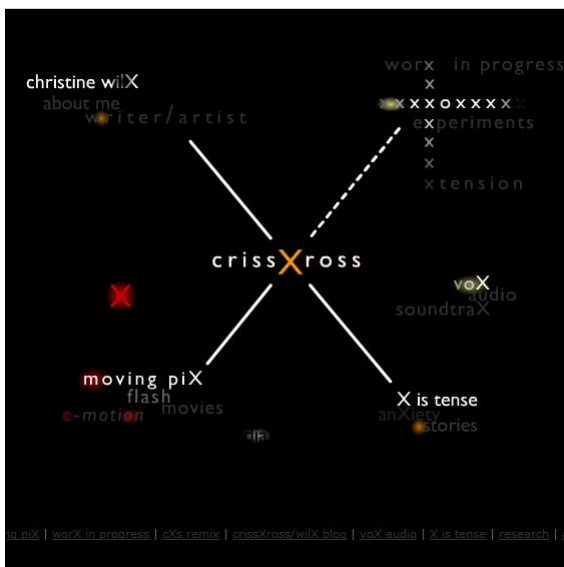
<http://crisscross.net/wilx/>

**the remix:**

[http://www.runran.net/remix\\_runran](http://www.runran.net/remix_runran)

**download the devil's rope journal:**

[http://cfisrv.finearts.uvic.ca/interactivefutures/IF07/devilsrope\\_download\\_combo.zip](http://cfisrv.finearts.uvic.ca/interactivefutures/IF07/devilsrope_download_combo.zip)



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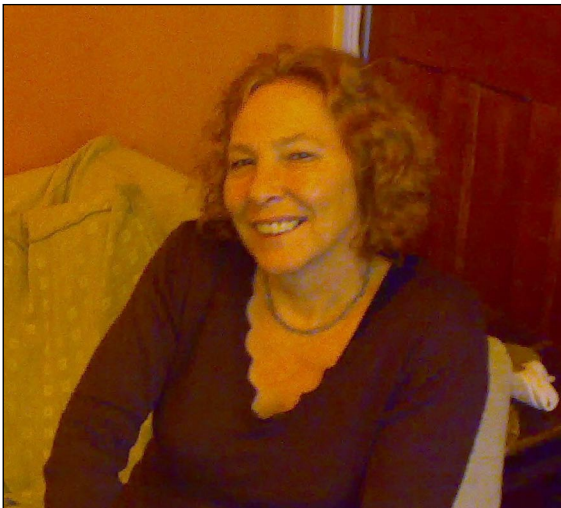
## Biography

In 2006 I made the decision to leave my post as a Senior Lecturer in Screenwriting and Media Production and return to freelance work. Whilst employed at Hallam University I had become increasingly interested in the potential of new media to enhance the learning potential of students and developing professional writers. I had also begun experimenting with teaching writing through the exploration of memory and location. Upon leaving Hallam I began working on a project called 'Fragments'. This project is a series of interlinked non linear autobiographical prose which can be read as individual pieces or part of a jigsaw of experience which exist in both the past and present of the writer.

My journey since leaving the world of higher education has been interesting and varied. I have continued to work in the area of Screenwriting working as a freelance script reader for European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs. This has entailed reading and reporting on scripts in a variety of genre for a range of organisations. I recently read and reported on 50 feature scripts for Film Base, a company based in the Republic of Ireland supported by the Irish Film Board. I have also been invited by Film Base to deliver a series of workshop on scripting for Short Films devised to support writers who intend to apply for future short film funding.

I am currently a Senior Visiting Fellow in Screenwriting, E-Learning and the Creative Industries at the university of Lincoln, at the same time I am just completing a six month contract to contribute to the creation of a virtual learning site for young people aged 14-16 who have found themselves excluded from main stream education. One of my roles in the project has been to use autobiographical writing to build confidence in the students to enable them to encompass attempting more formally accredited work.

I continue to be optimistic about the use of new media both to open up new forms of education and to enable personal expression less dominated by main stream conventions.



# Online MA in Creative Writing and New Media

[www.creativewritingandnewmedia.com](http://www.creativewritingandnewmedia.com)

The Online MA in Creative Writing and New Media at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK, is designed for writers interested in experimenting with new formats and exploring the potential of new technologies in their writing. Whether you write fiction, nonfiction, blogs or hypertext, we will help you develop your individual voice in a supportive and creative atmosphere which is challenging, interdisciplinary, and international. This 95% distance learning course has a unique commitment to the connections between writing and new media and offers an excellent online experience combined with one week's intensive study at the De Montfort campus. You will enjoy 1-1 tutorial support, lively workshops with fellow students, and the opportunity to create collaborative and interactive projects. The course is designed by Professor Sue Thomas, writer and former Artistic Director of the trAce Online Writing Centre, and Kate Pullinger, acclaimed novelist and new media writer. It has extensive links with important initiatives including DMU's Institute of Creative Technologies, research into digital narratives and new media writing, and the creative, digital and publishing industries.

## Course Philosophy

This degree is informed by contemporary thinking on transliteracy, meaning the ability to read, write and interpret across a range of media from orality through print and film to networked environments. Creative Writing, indeed the very nature of text itself, is changing. No longer bound by print, there are many opportunities for writers to experiment with new kinds of media, different voices and experimental platforms, both independently and in collaboration with other writers or other fields and disciplines. Not only is writing evolving, but writers themselves are developing broader expectations and aspirations. Novelists are learning about the potential of hypertext and multimedia to change the ways in which a story can be told. Journalists are finding that blogs and wikis are radically affecting their relationships with their readers. Community artists are discovering powerful collaborative narratives. And the commercial world is finding new and creative ways to interact with its employees and customers in the fast-growing attention economy of the internet. While digital media have altered the way we disseminate and gather information, readers - both online and offline - still hunger for compelling narratives. As readers, we want to be told stories; we want complex and interesting ideas and characters; we want vivid pictures in our heads. As writers we want to communicate. We need good stories well-told, whatever our choice of delivery platform. The MA in Creative Writing and New Media provides an opportunity to focus on developing work at the cutting edge of the new technologies and enables new ways of thinking about narrative.

For information visit: <http://www.creativewritingandnewmedia.com>

or contact

Promotion and Recruitment Centre  
Faculty of Humanities  
De Montfort University  
The Gateway  
Leicester  
LE1 9BH, UK  
Telephone: +44 (0) 116 250 6470  
Email: [pghums@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:pghums@dmu.ac.uk)



CLASS OF 2006



CLASS OF 2007