



Writing in Practice volume 9

Editorial

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We are excited to bring Issue 9 of *Writing in Practice* into the world along with our wonderful Issue Editors, Elen Caldecott and Celia Brayfield. This issue platforms powerful writing, dealing with ethical and social questions that are central to British cultural life in 2023, as well as reflections and conversations about textual craft and practice.

We are honoured to have Joan Anim Addo provide our guest article for this issue. In it she takes blunt aim at the excoriating lack of support for Black writers in Britain. Using her own libretto *IMOINDA* as a case study, Addo traces a history of structural inequality, tokenism and absence of opportunity for Black writers in Britain since the eighteenth century. She goes on to reflect on the further intersectional complexities for Black women writers in the UK and also highlights the notable vanguards who worked against systems to create chinks through which writers like Addo were able to present their work. It is a frank and necessary read for all involved in literary production in the UK.

Duncan Dicks's article draws out some vital ethical issues, many of which are explored in vital ways in Joan's article. He illustrates how creative writing and its narrative techniques can be used in many different educational contexts, including with medical students, to free learners to think about the moral implications of their work. His article is an essential primer for any pedagogue wanting to explore ethical issues with their students, showing the power of creative writing to bring sometimes abstract concepts – such as consequentialism and duty ethics – to life.

Alison Habens conducts an exacting reading of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, drawing on several translations, to consider how the text can be understood and questioned in light of #MeToo. Habens observes the necessity to reconsider the text for contemporary HE learners and demonstrates how creative practice can be used as part of this exploratory process.

Dr Sam Kemp picks up the visual theme with a wonderful re-evaluation of H.P. Lovecraft's haunted and haunting fiction of the early twentieth century by offering

not only a detailed review of Lovecraft's work but also visual interpretations of the prose. Kemp's focus upon Lovecraft's weird, sci-fi city of Arkham leads to the generation of some fascinating visual poetry.

Prose poetry is posited as comparable to a literary form of amuse-bouche by Cassandra Atherton, Paul Hetherington and Alyson Miller. They also highlight how food is used in the prose poem, and poems more broadly to consider elements of sensory pleasure. The authors consider how these elements work in their own prose poems and those of others to centre the experiential.

Mimi Thebo shares with us a revelatory journey in the form of a manifesto. In travelling through Oklahoma and reflecting on her knowledge and experience of the landscape, within the context of taking her mother's ashes to Louisiana, Thebo comes to a deeper understanding of the climate emergency, of colonialism and how these relate to the business of contemporary storytelling.

Jess Richards provides a beautiful and poignant last article to this journal edition. The article illustrates and explains a marvellous creative project which brings together both art and creative writing. Taking 'dying books' from thrift shops, the project led to the creation of a story about a book transforming into a bird and a series of numinous art works, beautifully photographed in the body of the article.

A key theme of this journal is the emancipatory power of creative writing and its ability to shape-shift to suit the needs of incredibly diverse audiences. Creative writing can be combined with art works to create the bespoke artefacts we see in Kemp and Richards' articles; it can be used to rethink neglected texts and decolonise our thinking as Anim-Addo notes; it can offer ways of understanding and tackling the urgency of the climate crisis as Thebo perceives; it can offer re-interpretations of vital misogynistic myths as Habens illustrates; and it can reshape the ethical thinking of medics and many other areas of life as Dicks argues.

It has been a privilege and a learning experience to consider these articles. We have been reminded of the reality that things don't just happen, that if we wish things to change, we need to do something about them and keep doing something about them. If we want to write something into existence, then we simply have to write and keep writing.

Kate North and Dr Francis Gilbert (co-editors of Writing in Practice)