

COURSE DETAILS – WEEKEND WE0295

TITLE: COMPELLING STORY WRITING, 3 – SUSPENSE, STYLE AND SYNOPSIS

TUTORS: LED BY GREG MOSSE

LEVEL: BEGINNERS/INTERMEDIATE

GENERAL CONTENT OF COURSE:

COMPELLING STORY WRITING, 3 is an extension of CSW1 and CSW2, but which welcomes new participants, too. It is an enjoyable and varied weekend course designed for participants of a similar level of experience to CSW1 and 2 (beginner to intermediate). CSW1 focused on *plot* and *character*. CSW2 focused on *location*, *dialogue* and *revision*. COMPELLING STORY WRITING, 3 covers *suspense*, *style* and *synopsis*.

The course is a careful mixture of teacher-led classes, individual study and collaborative writing. It begins with examples of classic stories of *suspense* and discusses their internal mechanics. It follows this up with stories of *suspense* from today's newspapers. Using photographic stimuli, we will compile stories from *events*, *locations* and *faces of characters* in different *styles*.

COMPELLING STORY WRITING, 3 will also use alternative ways of planning in order to develop *synopses* that can sell stories, including *storyboards*.

The course includes time for question-and-answer, professional advice and private study. (In order to provide time for private writing, one of the afternoon sessions on the Saturday will be replaced by an extra after-dinner session on Saturday evening.)

The general goal of the course is to help the participants to make decisions touching on the overall shape of their work, rather than close, detailed analysis.

Health and Safety: The tutor instructs students in health and safety issues relevant to this course. There are no health and safety restrictions on access to this studio/teaching space in the absence of the tutor.

THE TUTORS: The course is led by author, translator and educator Greg Mosse.

MOSIWE3

MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE:

Please bring with you:

Laptop (if you have one) Notebook Pencil Pen

Students also have access to PC's in the IT Suite or the Library.

General timetable for 2–9 day courses – each course starts with a welcome session on the first evening of the start date of the course and is followed by 2–9 days depending on the length of the course.

Arrival Day	From 4.00pm 7.00	Arrival for residential students. Non-residential students please arrive by 6.45pm for welcome chat and dinner. Dinner.
Daily	10.30 12.45pm 3.30 7.00	Coffee. Lunch. Tea. Dinner.
Departure – last day	10.00am 3.30	Residential students are asked to vacate rooms. Tea then departure.

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COMPELLING STORY WRITING, 3

COURSE TIMETABLE:

Day	Time	Session	Content
Friday	19h00-20h00	Dinner	<i>Introductions</i>
Friday	20h15-21h15	Session 1	<i>Elements</i> A rapid, enjoyable introduction to the weekend, with participants trying to think of key events from stories they have read and identifying how they contribute to <i>suspense</i> .

Day	Time	Session	Content
Saturday	9h15-10h30	Session 2	<i>I wonder ... ?</i> We will review a set of extracts of prose and dialogue – suggested in advance by participants – and discuss at what point you, the reader, begin to wonder. In other words, we will examine at what point narrative becomes <i>suspenseful</i> .
Saturday	11h00-12h30	Session 3	<i>Events</i> Using a range of visual stimuli, we will put together series of <i>events</i> – a fight, a loss, an escape, a triumph – in order to examine how suspense can be created. Using <i>characters</i> developed by participants, we will then consider how the personalities of these characters contribute to or undermine the <i>suspense</i> .
Saturday	14h00-15h30	Session 4	<i>Storyboard</i> We will add photographic <i>locations</i> to the events and characters from session 3 and transcribe them in storyboard format (like a cartoon or a graphic novel). In the second half of this session, we will attempt to combine several of these storyboards into a longer story, in order to work with larger scale ideas of how <i>suspense</i> works.
Saturday	16h00-17h30	Session 5	<i>Private writing</i> Participants are invited to use the <i>storyboard</i> format to create stories of suspense. Participants will be invited to bring with them images of people, places and things that they can use in pasting up their storyboards.
Saturday	20h15-21h15	Session 6	<i>Sharing</i> In this short 1-hour session, we will meet more informally to share and discuss each other's storyboards.

COMPELLING STORY WRITING, 3

COURSE TIMETABLE – CONTINUED

Day	Time	Session	Content
Sunday	9h15-10h30	Session 7	<p><i>Style</i></p> <p>In this morning session, participants are invited provide examples of different genres of fictions. We will discuss together the way in which these genres are different one from another. We will also discuss the way in which the different genres are sold and the relative commercial success of each.</p>
Sunday	11h00-12h30	Session 8	<p><i>Writing to order</i></p> <p>We will discuss writing for specific purposes, including for publication in specialist journals, on the internet, literary and commercial fiction, writing for children or adults, short story writing.</p> <p>Also in this session, we will look at a number of creative techniques designed to overcome writer's block.</p>
Sunday	14h00-15h30	Session 9	<p><i>Question and answer</i></p> <p>This final session will focus on reinforcing the following <i>key points</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. developing participants' awareness of the overall shape of their stories 2. understanding how to create suspense 3. using the storyboard format as an alternative to written notes 4. accepting and benefiting from writing to order or with arbitrary constraints. <p>Participants will be able to ask <i>questions</i> of the facilitators and of each other and share their appreciations of what they have learnt or rediscovered.</p>