



Training for Professionals Seminar – Audience Development – Young Readers

17th and 18th October 2019 Bantry, Ireland

17th October

Introduction to Audience Development – Rhiannon Davies

Introduction to Audience Development: how do we define audiences, what is audience development, how is it different from audience engagement, what does it mean, what does it involve, how do we define success and how do we measure success.

20 quick fixes to help you communicate effectively - Heather Maitland

Do you struggle to promote your work because you have a million other things to do? Here are 20 quick fixes to help you get more people reading and make your life more manageable by focusing on the tools that work. This practical session is designed to make sure you communicate this effectively online and offline. Together we will look at who your target audiences are, what they want from you and what's the best way of spending your time and money to show them what's special about what you do. All the fixes take no more than two hours to set up and 20 minutes a week to keep going.

The practicalities of Audience Development - Tools and Techniques - Rhiannon Davies

Know your audience, widen and diversify your audience, deepen the relationship with the audience, and measure audience development.

Practicalities of audience research to inform audience development: what questions should we be asking, how should we be asking them, what does a successful focus group look like, what do we need to ask to deepen our understanding of audiences, what are the additional considerations we may need to make when talking with young people compared to adults, where might we find new audiences.

18th October

Sarah's Book Project - Sarah Fitzgerald

In 2017, Sarah entered the BT Young Scientist with her project looking at the decline in reading amongst adolescents. She set up a dedicated website www.sarahsbookproject.com to help her with the aim that her project will encourage young people everywhere to read more. Sarah is 15 years old and currently in Transition Year. Sarah will talk about her project and her experience since she most recently became one of three ambassadors for Cruinniú na nÓg.

How you can help promote a love of reading in teens - Lorraine Levis

How do I switch it on?" The teen market and how you can help promote a love of reading in teens. Teens can be hard to understand at the best of times, knowing how to engage them with literature outside of the school curriculum can be even harder. Lorraine will be guiding us through the big trends for teen and young adult readers and discussing how we can use this knowledge to effectively stock our libraries and make the most of our spaces for young readers. She will also speak about how to introduce more advanced content safely and how to bridge difficult topics through literature.

Publishing trends in the Young Adult market – Imogen Russell Williams

Imogen will discuss the trends in Young Adult literature – who is publishing, what is popular, and also some information on the YA Book Prize.

Imogen will discuss US imports and the impact on UK and Irish authors as well as trends including, verse novels and poetry as one trend, will talk about identity as a prevalent and also about readership of YA. She will review how YA books can sometimes be 'ghettoised' in bookshops, how teens who are keen on reading tend to read adult books and so how do you lure teens to come and read YA?

Writing for and working with Young Adults - Louise O'Neill, Niall Cleary & E.R Murray

Panel discussion on their experience of successfully engaging young adults, including writing for the YA Market and delivering workshops looking at what works and does not work.

Speaker Biographies

Heather Maitland

Heather is an arts consultant, author, trainer and Associate Fellow at the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick.

She has worked as a marketer for a wide range of arts organisations: from the smallest of touring theatre companies to running the London end of the Royal Shakespeare Company's marketing operation. She supported audience, business and art form development in over 100 museums, galleries and performing arts organisations as head of two of the UK's audience development agencies. She has been working in Ireland since 2005, helping over 75 organisations understand and develop their audiences.

She has a particular interest in developing ways that small scale organisations and individual artists can develop audiences within their limited resources, most recently with artists and creatives from Ireland, Sweden and Spain as part of a Creative Europe project.

Heather is a huge crime fiction fan, even completing Writing East Midlands' short course on writing it.

Rhiannon Davies

Rhiannon is an independent consultant specialising in helping organisations to understand their current audience and develop their audience for the future through a pragmatic, evidence-centric approach. Initially working with the Audience Agency, Rhiannon has experience of working with a wide range of cultural and heritage organisations across the UK, from theatre companies to museums, dance festivals to choirs, and art galleries to consortium groups. With skills in audience development, audience research, and evaluation, Rhiannon aims to make sure that every project places the audience at the heart of an organisation's vision.

Lorraine Levis

Lorraine is a children's bookseller turned executive for Penguin Random House Ireland. Through her years of running a children's department, Lorraine has become a name in the industry for book recommendations and market knowledge. Last year she was awarded the Pan Macmillan Independent Bookshop Innovation Award for her work on promoting teen literacy and developing a true passion for reading in young people.

Imogen Russell Williams

Imogen is an editorial consultant and a children's literature critic, reviewing and writing on trends in children's and Young Adult publishing for The Times Literary Supplement, The Guardian and The Metro. She also reviews for other publications, including the glorious Books for Keeps, the UK's leading independent children's magazine. This means her understanding of the market is always current, and she has a comprehensive knowledge of both classic and contemporary children's literature to draw on. Imogen was also a judge for the inaugural YA Book Prize.

Louise O'Neill

Louise O' Neill grew up in Clonakilty, a small town in West Cork, Ireland. Her first novel, ONLY EVER YOURS, was released in 2014. Only Ever Yours went on to win the Sunday Independent Newcomer of the Year at the 2014 Bord Gáis Energy Irish Book Awards; the Children's Books Ireland Eilís Dillon Award for a First Children's Book; and The Bookseller's inaugural YA Book Prize 2015. Louise's second novel, ASKING FOR IT, was published in September 2015 to widespread critical acclaim. She went on to win the Specsaver's Senior Children's Book of the Year at the 2015 Irish Book Awards, the Literature Prize at Irish Tatler's Women of the Year Awards, and the American Library Association's Michael L. Printz award. Asking For It was voted Book of the Year at the Irish Books Awards 2015 and spent 52 weeks in the Irish top 10 bestseller list. The New York Times called it "riveting and essential" and The Guardian named O' Neill "the best YA fiction writer alive today." Both novels have been optioned for screen. O' Neill's first novel for adults, ALMOST LOVE, was published in March 2018. THE SURFACE BREAKS, her feminist re-imagining of The Little Mermaid, followed in May 2018 and was shortlisted for the Irish Book Awards, the National Book Awards in the UK, the Carnegie Medal, and the YA Book Prize. Her next book is for adults and due for release in 2020.

Niall Cleary

Niall is the Artistic Director and CEO of Graffiti Theatre Company. Graffiti produces theatre for young audiences and runs a wide range of creative programmes for young people to participate in, including a Young Playwrights Programme, Activate Youth Theatre, Fighting Words Creative Writing Workshops, and an early year's programme 'BEAG'. Before taking up his role as director at Graffiti, Niall was Creative Learning Coordinator with the company, developing theatre workshops for the company. Niall has worked as a freelance Youth Theatre Director and drama facilitator for 15 years. He sits on the board of Youth Theatre Ireland and is a committee member of Arts for All (Inclusive Arts) and Theatre for Young Audiences Ireland. Niall trained as a Drama Facilitator and also as a Post Primary Teacher of History and English before running away to return to the circus.

E.R. Murray

Elizabeth Rose Murray writes novels for children and young adults and short fiction. Her books include The Book of Learning – Nine Lives Trilogy 1 (2016 Dublin UNESCO Citywide Read for Children), The Book of Shadows – Nine Lives Trilogy 2 (shortlisted 2016 Irish Book Awards and 2016 Irish Literacy Association Award), The Book of Revenge – Nine Lives Trilogy 3 (Feb 2018) and Caramel Hearts (May 2016). She has short fiction published in reputable journals across Ireland, the UK, US and Australia, and has been shortlisted for several notable competitions including Francis McManus and Aesthetica Creative Works. Recent anthology publications include The Elysian: Creative Responses (New Binary Press) and Reading the Future (Arlen House). Elizabeth lives in West Cork where she fishes, grows her own vegetables and enjoys plenty of adventures with her dog, Franklyn. You can find out more about Elizabeth on her website, or chat to her on twitter @ERMurray, facebook or instagram.