

Interchange @ the Priestley

Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network) meets every Tuesday from 8pm at the Priestley Centre for Arts (formerly the Bradford Playhouse).

The sessions are informal and provide a sounding board for members' work, as well as constructive criticism and feedback should this be required.

Support, encouragement and words are at the forefront of the group's activities, and all kinds of writing is welcomed: poetry, short and long fiction, plays, memoirs, articles and songs.

Inside this issue...

**Thom the World
Poet interviewed,
anti-war poetry,
news, views and
events.**

Tykes take a bite

Mark Cantrell reports on a planned poetry tour of New York to take some tyke culture to the Big Apple

TYKE poets are planning to take a bite out of the Big Apple next year, during a poetry tour organised by Bruce Barnes. The question is: will they bite more than they can chew?

Another question might be why New York?

Bruce answers: "Because as Hilary said of Everest — it's there. New York is one of the major cultural centres of the world, with a really dynamic performance poetry and slam scene."

The trip would be a learning experience for the poets, as well as a chance to find new

inspirations and experience. It would also take a little bit of Bradford multiculturalism to the US city. A fitting venue, since it was many an immigrant's first sight of the States.

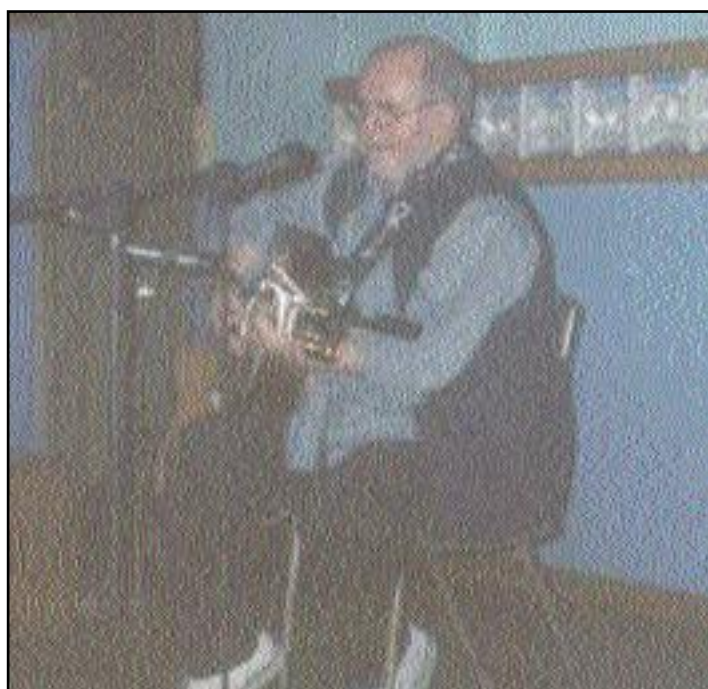
Despite the Bradford theme, and the predominant city entourage, Bruce says it will not be a 'tyke take over'. Bradford is a fitting theme to hang the readings on, as well as show what

poets in this city are capable of.

Early stages yet, he has nevertheless received interest from five poets, including Brian Docherty from London. He has also heard favourably from at least one venue in New York, the Bowery Poetry Club.

If the planned trip goes ahead, then the Tyke invasion of New York's poetry scene will take place in April. At the moment, Bruce is considering funding applications to assist those who may not have the funds to get there under their own steam.

RIGHT: Roy Bailey was the headline performer at an evening of poetry and song intended to promote an anti-war message. Many an Interchange member performed at the Stop the War benefit gig at the Love Apple. See story on back page.



Writers' notes Amber prizes

NEW Writer magazine has launched a workbook especially for writers to keep track of their submissions as well as jot down their latest idea.

The A5 spiral bound book consists of 100 pages designed to track submissions, accounts, proposals and also contains a wealth of advice for writers.

A further 100 blank pages are included for notes and ideas.

Contents include: projects and contacts, writers' bookshelf, short story writing and submissions, competitions advice, personal notes and records, writers workshops and

conferences, proposals to publishers, accounts and book-keeping.

It is available free of charge as part of the subscription package to the bi-monthly publication (£22.50), or can be bought from the magazine for the price of £10 (including postage and packing). Cheques are payable to 'the New Writer'.

To order a copy write to: The New Writer magazine, PO Box 60, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 2ZR.

Mark Cantrell

Advertisement

Scribble

Creative writing workshops run by disabled writers for disabled writers or would-be writers

Saturday 7th December

1.30 -- 4.00pm

**Dreams and Archetypes
with Ruth Collett**

Leeds Central Library Meeting Room (Level Access via basement and lift to 3rd floor.)
Access needs will be met. Please book in advance a-scribe@supanet.com
01274 725541 (phone/minicom)

YOUNG people living the UK and aged 16 to 19 are invited to enter a writing competition organised by Black Amber Books and Bradford 2008.

Bradford 2008 is the name of the committee organising Bradford's bid to become the Capital of Culture in 2008. The organisation has themed the competition on one of David Hockney's paintings: *One Landscape Many Views*. This image has been used to symbolise the culture campaign and the city's diverse multi-cultural community. This does not, however, limit writers to the 'great outdoors' but allow them to 'let their imaginations free and embark on an emotional, humorous or personal journeys which describe their landscapes' the organisation says.

Shortlisted entrants and winners will be invited to a workshop with professional writers, and be published in an anthology to be published by Black

Amber next year. The winners themselves will additionally win a laptop computer.

The competition features five categories: email (thought to be the first category of its kind in a competition), feature (as in magazines or newspapers), TV/film or radio scripts, poetry and short stories. Entries should be no longer than 1,500 words or 100 lines for poetry and all entries should be previously unpublished or broadcast. Entrants may enter any or all of the categories.

The deadline for competition entries (which must be in English) is Friday, 17 January 2003 and should be sent to Yeh, Write, Bradford 2008, Merchants House, Peckover Street, Bradford, BD1 5BD.

Full rules and further information can be obtained at:
<http://www.blackamber.com> or
<http://www.bradford2008.com>.

Mark Cantrell

Words to fill the page

GOT anything to share with fellow scribes? Then scribble it down and get it to Tyke Writer. The newsletter is always keen to hear news about what writers are doing, either individually, or as a group. Events, publication successes, activities and so on. Short poetry and prose is also welcome. To submit work, see the contact details on the back page of this issue.

Thom talks worldly words

*HE came, he saw, he wowed us with his verse, he buggered off again. Yes, that was Thom the World Poet who concluded his latest tour at last month's Orpheus. Thom has been a regular visitor to the UK and to Interchange events over the years. This time Tyke Writer editor **Mark Cantrell** managed to collar him before he hurried to catch his flight back to the States. Here's what he had to say...*

“**PERFORMING connects me to the dreams in others and it sustains and maintains the dreams in me,” says Thom the World Poet.**

Larger than life, colourful, and a regular visitor to Bradford, Thom is the reincarnation of the ancient bard: a wandering nomad on a quest to bring the light of verse to all and sundry.

Or, as he puts it himself, he's a fictional entity based on the Mediaeval ballads: *The Ballad of Poor Tom*. “*Poor Tom has come into the world again to see if he can cure your distempered brain. Come maid, come mare, be not afraid. Poor Tom will injure no-one...*”

“In a time of power, truth needs to be in disguise,” Thom adds.

The man behind the image is Thom Woodruff, a powerful and enthralling performance poet. His work is improvisational — so no performance is ever the same twice,

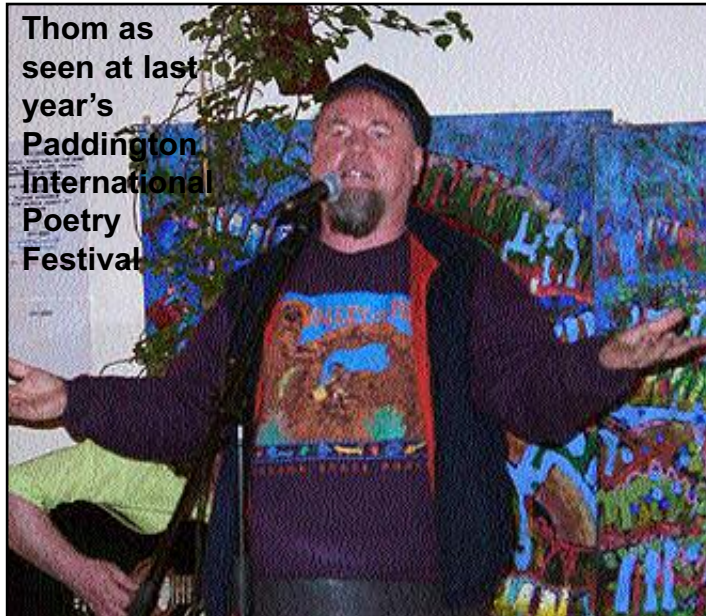
but constantly renewed by this poet's never-fading energy.

Originally from Australia, he has made his home base in Austin, Texas. There, he runs the Austin International Poetry Festival (AIPF) and local venues such as the weekly Café Mundi and the monthly Expressions.

Thom is a rare breed indeed in the poetry world. He earns his keep solely from his bardic activities. Over the years, his performance pieces have been encapsulated within the pages of 75 self-published books. Both a testament to his eloquent and experimental poetry as well as his prolific mind.

He started improvising poetry by chanting back in 1973 at the Rainbow Festival. As Thom explains: “Musicians backed me up and soon hundreds were dancing to the words and music.”

Later, he began distributing free broadsheets of poetry on the



streets of Melbourne ‘when it became obvious that no-one remembered the improvisations’. He changed to booklets when it became apparent that no-one valued the free sheets of poetry.

He established the AIPF in 1991 after visiting a poetry festival in the park there. After receiving a firm ‘no’ to his request to perform, he became determined to found a venue open to all. The same year he visited Bradford for the first time. “I was immediately and warmly welcomed into their circle so I have returned for the last decade,” he says.

During his time in Bradford he has supported both Interchange and the Beehive Poets. He also runs workshops for MIND, Yorkshire Arts Circus and also schools.

Despite being wel-

coming to this ‘ambassador’ of poetry, Bradford is not without its problems he notes: “Bradford has a fragile series of circles that seem to ignore each other — they do not seem to want to go outside their comfort zones.

“Beehive poets rarely come to the Melborn or the Priestley. This needs to change.”

Fair criticism — or a comment based on his obvious lack of year round involvement in the local scene? No matter, just catch him on his next visit later this year, and enjoy his dazzling performances.

“It's time to talk and listen,” he says. “To give new faith to oral traditions, to memory and re-imagining (*sic*), to improvise and take big risks. Leave the texts behind and make it up as you go along. I do!”

Plot night poetry

PLOT Night went off with a poetic bang this year, with Interchange members joining a host of talent at the Love Apple cafe for an evening of anti-war performance.

The night was not an Interchange event, but it was organised by Karl Dallas on behalf of the local Stop the War coalition, which opposes war on Iraq. Organised as a fund raiser, the night generated more than £200 to help fund the campaign's anti-war activities.

Among the performers were Bruce Barnes, Karl Dallas, Rahel Guzellian, Rachel Taylor, Co-



Darajo, Janet Wood, Patrick Blues, Eddie Lawler and Kevin Flaherty. The headline performer was singer song writer Roy Bailey. "Poetry is a creative

Above: Co-Dajaro play to stop the war at the Love Apple on Plot Night

impulse," said event organiser Karl Dallas. "We are trying to build

up a tidal wave of public opinion against the war using — in this instance — poetry and song to bind people together as a force for peace."

Lesley McGorrigan, the local Stop the War convenor added: "Poetry can't stop war, but I do think it can stimulate and motivate people. We can protest and have fun while doing it."

And a good time was certainly had by all.

Mark Cantrell

Mark Cantrell

The Tyke Writer is the monthly newsletter of the Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network).

For further details of the group, or to get involved, come down to the Priestley Centre for Arts, Chapel Street, Little Germany, Bradford.

Or contact:

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Email: interchange@brad.communigate.co.uk

Web: <http://www.communigate.co.uk/brad/interchange>

Editorial contributions are welcome, but will be edited for space and style.

All contributions must bear the author's name, which may appear as a byline. Contributions are also preferably received in type written form.

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Interchange (Bradford Writers' Network).

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Capital words

AUDIENCES Yorkshire and Yorkshire Arts have launched 'Yorkshire: Capital of the Word' to emphasise the region as a birthplace of literary talent and celebrate creativity in the region.

Over the next few months over 200 events will showcase Yorkshire talent, such as the literary festivals in Ilkley, Sheffield, Beverly and Hull.

"Yorkshire has produced and provided inspiration for some of the finest writers the

world has seen," says the initiative's Haidee Bell. "Over the next few months Yorkshire will play host to leading exponents of fiction, biography and poetry and encourage home-grown writers of all ages to cash in on the creative vibe."

A booklet has been published detailing Capital of Word events, and information can also be obtained from the website at <http://www.digYorkshire.com>.