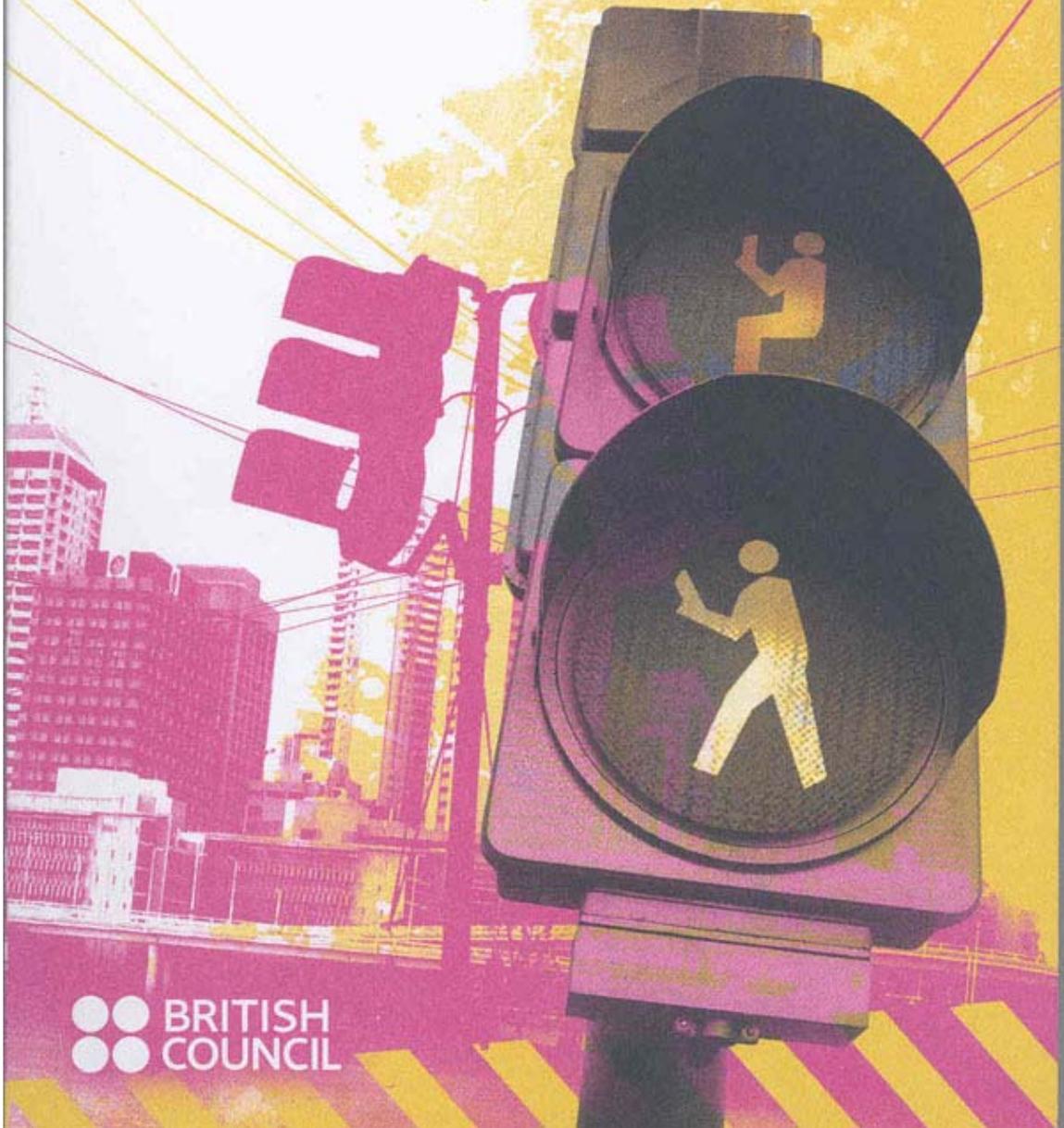


READING THE CITY



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Introduction

It can all happen at the edge of vision.

What are they doing?

Are those secret messages on that wall or the babble of the city itself? The urban landscape is a mysterious entity – it all seems perfectly normal in our home environment but when we step into another's then the questions start.

What are they doing with that?

Where are they going?

Language is changed and given form by landscape, a thousand games are created each day in the battle to tip boredom over into excitement. Writers infiltrate the streets and slip through closed doors. They bring back strange treasures. *Reading the city* offers you a guide to looking at the urban landscape in new ways whether through writing, through films or exotic digital creations that mix the two.

Perhaps it is the unique density and diversity of urban populations that feeds this chemistry of ideas, pleasures, and identities. The culture created by these worlds is one that urges the reader and the viewer to step outside their way of seeing and look anew at their familiar world. So go ahead.

David Kendall
2006

Booklist

Fiction and poetry

Underwords: The Hidden City: The Booktrust London Short Story Competition Anthology

Maia Press Limited 2005 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 1-904559-14-X

Writing on the theme of hidden London, uncovering little-known aspects of this diverse city. This anthology features six stories by previously unpublished Londoners, together with work by prominent London authors Diran Adebayo, Nicola Barker, Romesh Gunesequera, Sarah Hall, Hanif Kureishi, Andrea Levy, Patrick Neate and Alex Wheatle.

Debjani Chatterjee (ed.)

Mango Shakes

Tindal Street Press 2006 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-9547913-6-3

An anthology of eight stories by young British Asian men about urban culture and the complexities of family life. Includes tales of magic and myth from the beaches of Guyana.

Diran Adebayo

Some Kind of Black

Abacus 1997 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-349-10872-2

Dele is a young student who glides through violence, love and politics, with his sister Dapo. He comes of age in black London with its world of Afro-bohos, Nubians and the Love Has No Colour Brigade, with the soundtrack of pirate radio playing in the background.

Naomi Alderman

Disobedience

Viking 2006 Paperback £10.99 ISBN 0-670-91644-7

In a cramped synagogue in north-west London, the eminent elderly rabbi passes away. On the other side of the Atlantic, his estranged daughter, Ronit, hears of her father's death and returns to London for the funeral. She has not returned home in 15 years. Ronit looks forward to a week or two of revisiting old friends, perhaps settling old scores. But she finds the community she grew up in a more confusing place than she'd anticipated, particularly when she is unexpectedly reunited with Esti, her childhood girlfriend, who has taken a very different path in life.

Monica Ali

Brick Lane

Black Swan 2004 Paperback £7.99 ISBN 0-552-77115-5

This is the tale of Nazneen, a young Bangladeshi woman trying to make sense of her life in London's gritty Tower Hamlets. Portraying her arranged marriage to Chanu and her developing relationship with Karim, a radical Muslim, the novel is inter-cut with letters from Nazneen's sister Hasina, who married for love and is struggling to make her own way in Bangladesh, having left her abusive husband.

Biyi Bandele

The Street

Picador 2000 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-330-37539-3

Set in a multicultural community, *The Street* is populated with a series of unique characters, including Mide the bookseller who moonlights as a stand-up comedian, The Heckler who taunts the sandwich-board preachers outside the tube station and Nehushta, whose father has just woken from a 15-year coma. With a lively and engaging mix of characters, *The Street* is a witty take on contemporary British life.

Nicola Barker

Small Holdings

Faber and Faber 1996 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-571-17588-0

A comedy of errors featuring a mixture of quirky characters. A group of gardeners in a park in Palmers Green, north London, find themselves in crisis as an important meeting with the council looms. In this little oasis of nature a stirring tale of surrealism and subterfuge among the shrubbery unfolds. The protagonists are Phil, a chronically shy gardener; Doug, his imposing and unpredictable supervisor; and a malevolent one-legged ex-museum curator

called Saleem. Phil strives nobly to maintain his equilibrium despite being systematically mystified, brutalised, drugged, derided and seduced. But when he loses his eyebrows, he decides to fight back.

Nick Barlay

Curvy Lovebox

The X Press 1997 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 1-874509-47-6

A lively novel set in London's underground club scene over 24 hours. The story revolves around petty hoodlums Tax and Nood, a drugs rip-off, a wedding and an unforgiving revenge.

Belle de Jour

Belle de Jour: Intimate Adventures of a London Call Girl

Phoenix 2005 Paperback £7.99 ISBN 0-7538-1923-6

Belle de Jour is the *nom de plume* of a high-class call girl working in London. This is her story. From the summer of 2003 to the autumn of 2004 Belle charted her day-to-day adventures on and off the field, in a frank web diary. Now, in her *Intimate Adventures*, Belle elaborates on those diary entries, revealing (among other things) how she became a working girl, what it feels like to do it for money, and where to buy the best knickers for the job. This is a no-holds barred account of the high-class sex-trade, and an insight into the secret life of an extraordinary woman.

Alan Bissett

Boyracers

Polygon 2002 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-7486-6328-2

Boyracers is a thunderous account of being young and wild. Set in Falkirk, Scotland, the teenage characters speed their way through contemporary popular culture, taking in Irn-Bru, *The Lord of the Rings*, Radiohead, ten-pin bowling, text-messaging, Spiderman, Stephen King and the death of punk in an adrenaline-fuelled ride. An energetic, vibrant and poignant tale.

Paul Burston

Shameless

Abacus 2002 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-349-11479-X

Martin is not happy his boyfriend of four years has run off and left him for a male prostitute. His best friend John is too busy looking for sex on the internet to offer much in the way of support. His gal pal Caroline is convinced that her own boyfriend is a closet case. And to top it all, Martin's hippie father is threatening to come and stay. So Martin does what every out and proud gay man in London is encouraged to do: he jumps head first into hedonism. He joins a gym, and throws himself into the gay club scene, a world of drugs and muscles, promiscuous sex. But it isn't long before Martin begins to weary of the shallower aspects of the scene. Can he find the man of his dreams when sex has become a substitute for love?

Jill Dawson

Magpie

Sceptre 2004 Paperback £7.99 ISBN 0-340-65385-X

In the dead of night, Lily Waite and her five-year-old son, Matthew, arrive at their new home on a council estate in east London, their only possessions two suitcases and a bag of charred remains. Their past is a mystery: Matthew's father is nowhere in evidence, and Lily is resolute in her need for privacy. But Lily has to come to terms with the events that precipitated their flight from Yorkshire and, as she relaxes enough to allow new relationships into their lives, the secrets of the past finally begin to relinquish their hold on the future.

Bernardine Evaristo

The Emperor's Babe

Penguin Books 2002 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-14-029781-2

A funky and sexy Londinium in AD211 is imaginatively evoked in the story of Zuleika, the feisty daughter of Sudanese immigrants. She is married off at the age of 11 to a merchant, Felix, who is three times her age, but later becomes the lover, or the Emperor's Babe, of Septimus Severus. This novel in verse is a lyrical and witty imagining of a black history of Britain delving into the intricacies of race, gender, and class in Roman-occupied London.

Neil Gaiman

Anansi Boys

Headline Review 2005 Paperback £11.99 ISBN 0-7553-0508-6

Fat Charlie Nancy is angry, confused and more than a little scared – right now his life is spinning out of control, and it is all his dad's fault. If his estranged father hadn't dropped dead at a karaoke night, Charlie would still be blissfully unaware that his dad was Anansi, the spider god. He would have no idea that he has a brother called Spider, who is also a god. And there would be no chance that said brother would be trying to take over his life, flat and fiancée, or, to make matters worse, be doing a much better job of it than him. Desperate to reclaim his life, Charlie enlists the help of four more-than-slightly eccentric old ladies and their unique brand of voodoo – and between them they unleash a bitter and twisted force to get rid of Spider. But, as darkness descends and badness begins, is Fat Charlie Nancy going to get his life back in one piece or is he about to enter a whole netherworld of pain?

Jo-Ann Goodwin

Sweet Gum

Bantam Press 2006 Hardback 12.99 ISBN 0-593-04524-6

Eugene Burnside joined The Firm before he left school, running drugs. Clever and ambitious, he is definitely going places, though his personal life is not so sweet. Living with his widowed mum, Gladys, and his sister Simone, Eugene is devoted to them both. He wishes he felt the same about Simone's disturbed six-year-old son, Nero. But evil has come to haunt the alleys and arches of north London – a sado-sexual killer has begun his grisly work and now Eugene must fight to protect everything he holds dear and everyone he loves.

Lisa Jewell

A Friend of the Family

Michael Joseph 2003 Paperback £10.99 ISBN 0-7181-4556-9

Tony is dealing with divorce and a weight problem, Sean has writer's block and is coping with a shock announcement, while Ned has made a surprise return from Australia. Three brothers cope with adult life and wonder why their mum is so keen on looking after Gervase, the unsavoury waif.

Sophie Kinsella

The Secret Dreamworld of a Shopaholic

Black Swan 2000 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-552-99887-7

Financial journalist Rebecca Bloomwood spends her life telling others how best to manage their money. However, Rebecca's own finances lurch from bad to worse as she constantly indulges in retail therapy. A witty look at consumerism and our obsession with material goods.

Hanif Kureishi

The Black Album

Faber and Faber 2000 Paperback £4.99 ISBN 0-571-20392-2

Set in London in 1989, the year of the fatwah and the fall of the Berlin Wall, this is a thriller with a background of raves, ecstasy, religious ferment and sexual passion. The story of a young man in search of experience, torn between the conflicting attractions of religious idealism and sexual love.

Andrea Levy

Small Island

Headline Review 2004 Hardback £14.99 ISBN 0-7553-0749-6

Returning to England after the war Gilbert Joseph is treated very differently now that he is no longer in an RAF uniform. Joined by his wife Hortense, he rekindles a friendship with Queenie, who takes in Jamaican lodgers. Can their dreams of a better life in England overcome the prejudice they face?

Toby Litt

Corpsing

Penguin Books 2000 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-14-028577-6

A stylish literary thriller complete with lovingly described bullet wounds, a cycle courier dressed to kill, fashionable restaurants and even more fashionable dresses. A cynical and ironic view of contemporary London life.

Alexander McCall Smith, Ian Rankin and Irvine Welsh

One City

Polygon 2006 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 1-904598-74-9

Scotland's capital city enjoys immense international prestige for its cultural and artistic excellence, but it is also a city of dark contrasts. Edinburgh is the inspiration for this humorous and imaginative short story collection from three of its finest contemporary writers.

Karen McCarthy (ed.)

Bittersweet: Contemporary Black Women's Poetry

The Women's Press 2001 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 0-7043-4607-9

First published to coincide with Black History Month 1998, *Bittersweet* presents a collection of contemporary black women's poetry. Featured poets include Alice Walker, Patience Agbabi, Debjani Chatterjee, Grace Nichols and Shamshad Khan.

Karen McCarthy (ed.)

Kin: New Fiction by Black and Asian Women

Serpent's Tail 2003 Paperback £8.99 ISBN 1-85242-852-X

The presence of black and Asian people in the UK has altered the nation in so many ways that British culture is now one of fusion. Against this backdrop, *Kin* brings together a range of new literary talent that offers stories about mothers, sisters, lovers, best friends and brides-to-be. The authors in this anthology are Jamika Ajalon, Francesca Beard, Donna Daley-Clarke, Krishna Dutta, Diana Evans, Barbara Graham, Amanthi Harris, Heather Imani, Sharon Jennings, Kalbinder Kaur, Shiromi Pinto, Ranbir Sahota, Nicola Sinclair, Saradha Soobrayen and Gemma Weekes.

Nicholas Makoha

The Lost Collection of an Invisible Man

Flipped Eye Publishing 2005 Paperback £4.00 ISBN 1-905233-03-5

Nicholas Makoha's first poetry collection, bringing together biblical speak and magical imagery.

Gautam Malkani

Londonstani

Fourth Estate 2006 Hardback 14.99 0-00-723175-X

Set close to the Heathrow feed roads of Hounslow, Malkani shows us the lives of a gang of four young men: Hardjit the ring leader, a Sikh, violent, determined that his caste stay pure; Ravi, determinedly tactless, a sheep following the herd; Amit, whose brother Arun is struggling to win the approval of his mother for the Hindu girl he has chosen to marry; and Jas, who tells us of his journey with these three, desperate to be admired by them, desperate too for Samira, a Muslim girl, which in this story can only have bad consequences. *Londonstani* is about many things: tribalism, aggressive masculinity, integration, cross-cultural chatting-up techniques, the urban scene seeping into the mainstream, bling bling economics and complicated family matters.

Patrick Neate

City of Tiny Lights

Viking 2005 Hardback £15.99 ISBN 0-670-91265-4

Meet Tommy Akhtar, cricket aficionado, devoted son, sometime private investigator and sometime idol to west London's thugs. He's just woken up with another hangover when his next case comes through the door. Exotic Melody is searching for her fellow hooker, Sexy Russian, last seen meeting a client in a Mayfair dive. But as the search for Sexy Russian heats up, Tommy's case takes a turn for the sinister. He's drawn into a murder investigation and the dark side of both the establishment and those who plan to overthrow it. *City of Tiny Lights* explores the underbelly of the cultural mix that makes up London and questions just what it really means to be British right now.

Patrick Neate, Damian Platt

Culture Is Our Weapon: Afro Reggae in the Favelas of Rio

Latin America Bureau 2006 Paperback £8.99 ISBN 1-899365-69-9

This book tells the story of the drugs war in Rio through the eyes of both the protagonists and those it affects, revealing the complexities of life on the frontline of one of the most damaging

civil conflicts in Latin America. At centre stage is the extraordinary work of Grupo Cultural AfroReggae, a Rio-based NGO which seeks to divert *favela* residents from the path of poverty and violence, through music and an appreciation of black culture. AfroReggae are taking *favela* culture to the world.

Patrick Neate

Where You're At: Notes from the Frontline of a Hip Hop Planet

Bloomsbury 2003 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 0-7475-6383-7

An examination of the worldwide hip-hop phenomenon. From the capitalist madness of Tokyo to the violence of Johannesburg, Patrick Neate explores how the potent symbolism of black America has been acquired, used and subsumed by cultures on every continent to create a different form of globalism.

Patrick Ness

Topics About Which I Know Nothing

Harper Perennial 2005 Paperback £7.99 ISBN 0-00-713944-6

Have you heard the urban myth about Jesus's double-jointed elbows yet? Or seen the latest reports on the 'groomgrabbing' trend – the benevolent kidnapping of badly-dressed children by their well-meaning (and more dapper) elders? Heard the one about the Amazon from the Isle of Man? Or perhaps you'd like a job in telesales, offering self-defence classes over the phone? Don't worry, as long as you meet the weekly quota, you won't be sent to the end of the hall! *Topics About Which I Know Nothing* is a fictional guide to how the world might have turned out.

Courtia Newland

The Dying Wish

Abacus 2006 Paperback £2.99 ISBN 0-349-11963-5

Ervine James is in good spirits; his private investigation business is going well, he has partially restored his relationship with his family, and his best friend and new partner Carmen Sinclair has proved to be more of an asset, both emotionally and financially, than he ever could have dreamed of. But when a mysteriously secretive company rents the office next door for a few months before suddenly disappearing without trace, followed by the arrival of police detectives investigating allegations of organised group homicides, Ervine and Carmen are drawn into a mystery so deep that neither believes that they could find out the truth behind that office door without risking their very lives.

Courtia Newland

The Scholar: A West Side Story

Abacus 1998 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-349-10876-5

The Scholar is an absorbing debut set on a violent west London estate. Focusing on two very different teenage cousins the novel examines what happens when their worlds collide, revealing how staying on the right side of the law is not always easy for a young black British man.

Jeff Noon

Needle in the Groove

Black Swan 2001 £6.99 ISBN 0-552-99919-9

Based in Manchester in the near future, inspired by the sampling and sound manipulation of contemporary music. Bass player Elliot Hill is treading water on the pub circuit until one day he is invited to join a new band that fuses DJ artistry, voice and rhythm, producing a startling new recording technology.

Sam North

The Unnumbered

Scribner 2004 Hardback £12.99 ISBN 0-7432-4850-3

There is another side to contemporary London – another race. They have no jobs, no driving licence, no identity of any sort and they pass us by every day. Nio is an unnumbered, he's 23, and Greek. He's built a home for himself in Coldfall Woods. It's his secret, but not for much longer. Dark-eyed Mila is 15 and lives in a caravan off the North Circular Road. She's an unnumbered too, but she's just bought herself an identity, and works as a checkout girl. It's a

start. She's going to reach the stars some day. Lucas Tooth can sense it too. He works his charm on all these women; the hopeful, the sad, the desperate. But only when they feel the fear does it bring him the pleasure. And now it's Mila's turn. But Nio and Mila fall in love; dreamer and realist. Together they will take on this London and all it can throw at them. But it is not an easy city. It exacts a hard tribute. The city has brought them together. The city could tear them apart.

Ian Rankin

Fleshmarket Close

Orion 2006 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-7528-7938-3

Inspector Rebus is stubborn, idiosyncratic and dark. In *Fleshmarket Close* he is drawn into a case involving the murder of an illegal immigrant. Among the issues of corruption and greed thrown up by this troubling case, he is faced with other, more personal difficulties as he tries to find his place in a changing police force.

Ian Rankin

Watchman

Orion 2004 Paperback £10.99 ISBN 0-7528-6034-8

Bombs are exploding in the streets of London, but life seems to have planted more subtle traps for Miles Flint. Miles is a spy. His job is to watch and to listen, then to report back to his superiors, nothing more. The job, affording glimpses into the most private lives of his victims, appeals to Miles. He doesn't lust after promotion, and he doesn't want action. He wants, just for once, not to botch a case. Having lost one suspect – with horrific consequences – Miles becomes too involved with another, a young Irish woman. His marriage seems ready to crumble to dust. So does his home. But Miles is given one last chance for redemption – a trip to Belfast, which quickly becomes a flight of terror, murder and shocking discoveries. But can the voyeur survive in a world of violent action?

Gwendoline Riley

Cold Water

Jonathan Cape 2002 Paperback £10.00 ISBN 0-224-06277-8

An elegant tale following young bar-girl Carmel and the eccentric cast of memorable characters who inhabit her Manchester twilight dive bar world. Carmel spends her time pondering on her lost love Tony, dreaming of exchanging her urban life for an idyllic Cornish existence and forming strange alliances with her bar-fly customers.

Roger Robinson

Adventures in 3D

Flipped Eye Publishing 2002 Paperback £10.00 ISBN 0-9541570-0-1

Roger Robinson's first fiction collection straddles the sensibilities of hip hop and the heightened awareness of a samurai stranded in a forest. From the man who ponders the best way to break up with his girlfriend considering that she's a 6th Dan Karate expert, to the millennium love match between a self-centred young man and a the deaf cousin of *his* cousin's girlfriend, *Adventures in 3D* satirises relationships, love, authority family and friends.

Roger Robinson

Suitcase

Flipped Eye Publishing 2004 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 0-9542247-7-9

This poetry collection brings Trinidad alive in a voice that is compelling and warm. The work ranges from very tender and often moving poems about Robinson's family and upbringing to some ferocious, angry and bitter longer poems about the black experience in Britain.

Zadie Smith

White Teeth

Penguin Books 2001 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-14-027633-5

The story travels through Jamaica, Turkey, Bangladesh and India but ends up in a scrubby north London borough, home of two unlikely heroes: prevaricating Archie Jones and intemperate Samad Iqbal. They met in the Second World War and have been best friends ever since. Archie marries beautiful, buck-toothed Clara, who's on the run from her Jehovah's Witness mother, and they have a daughter, Irie. Samad marries stropky Alsana and they have twin sons. An affectionate portrayal of characters and their complex lives.

Meera Syal

Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee

Black Swan 2000 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-552-99952-0

This story explores the ties that bind three Indian women living in London. With a satirical eye on the media, the strengths and limits of female friendships, mixed-race relationships, infidelity and arranged marriages, the characters are steered through some significant growing up.

Rachel Trezise

In and Out of the Goldfish Bowl

Parthian Books 2000 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 1-902638-07-7

Set in the unemployment-blighted Welsh Rhondda valley, this is a short autobiographical account of a neglected childhood, where the dysfunctional adults fight and steal and are regularly drunk and abusive, and where home offers no sanctuary.

Irvine Welsh

The Acid House

Methuen 2000 Paperback £11.99 ISBN 0-41-372420-4

The characters in this collection of stories are often – on the surface – depraved, vicious, cowardly and manipulative, but their essential humanity is never undermined. Stereotypes are at once celebrated and destroyed as the protagonists find themselves on unfamiliar ground. Combining a vicious sense of humour with hard-talking drama, *The Acid House* reaches into the hearts and minds of the chemical generation, casting a dark and unholy light into the hidden corners of the human psyche.

Louise Welsh

The Cutting Room

Canongate Books 2002 Paperback £10.99 ISBN 1-84195-280-X

Set in Glasgow, *The Cutting Room* is an erotically charged thriller based around the intriguing character of Rilke, a photographer who stumbles upon a series of disturbing and violent photos. The photos lead him on an obsessive journey to discover more about the owner of the images, who has since died.

Alex Wheatle

East of Acre Lane

Fourth Estate 2002 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 1-84115-440-7

Set against the backdrop of the 1981 Brixton race riots, *East of Acre Lane* tells the story of Biscuit, a young black man attempting to sort his life out at a difficult time personally and politically.

Teenage fiction

Julie Burchill

Sugar Rush

Macmillan Children's Books 2004 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 0-330-41571-9

Sixteen-year-old Kim is horrified when her dad tells her she's got to leave her posh private school and go to the infamous Ravendene Comprehensive. How will she survive in this wild and hormonal adolescent jungle? But then Kim meets gorgeous Maria (better known as Sugar) Sweet and falls instantly under her spell. Leaving her restrained, good-girl past far behind, Kim finds herself not only drawn into Sugar's exciting and daring life – but also asking herself a disturbing question: has she fallen deeply in love with her best friend?

Melvin Burgess

Junk

Puffin 1997 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 0-14-038019-1

Penguin Children's Audiobooks 2002 Audiotape £7.99 ISBN 0-14-180359-2

Tar loves Gemma, but Gemma doesn't want to be tied down, not for anyone or anything. Gemma wants to fly, but no one can fly for ever. One day, somehow, finally, you have to come down. A true-to-life story of two teenagers drawn into the dangerous and destructive world of heroin addiction.

Alan Gibbons

Blood Pressure

Orion Children's Books 2005 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 1-84255-199-X

Aidan has it all – a happy home in leafy suburbia with two cars parked on the drive, and all a boy could ask for in terms of designer labels and gadgets. He's top of the class, captain of the swimming team and has the gorgeous Emily hanging on his every word. So a trip up north with Mum to visit his dying grandfather doesn't go down well. But it does teach Aidan a thing or two about real life – and friendships, trust, loyalty and survival. He's shattered to discover his real father is a gangland drugs dealer recently released from prison and out to regain his scrap of turf, whatever it takes. He's surprised and confused to find he's falling in love with the intriguing Jade, even though she's already pregnant after a fling with one of the bad lads who hang out on the estate. He's humbled by his grandparents, how little they have, but how much wisdom and love they offer him.

Chrissie Glazebrook

The Madolscents

Heinemann 2001 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 0-434-00985-7

Set in Newcastle, *The Madolscents* is the anarchic story of Rowena, a confused teenager working as a funeral parlour make-up artist. Along with other members of her therapy group, Rowena embarks on a series of madcap adventures. Incorporating the language of streetwise teenagers from the north-east, *The Madolscents* is a humorous, if angst-ridden, tale of teenage paranoia and escapism.

Peter Hayden

And Smith Must Score

Crazy Horse Press 1999 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 1-871870-08-9

A humorous tale of football obsession, dating dilemmas, family separation and petty crime, written as a first-person narrative.

Graham Joyce

TWOC

Faber and Faber 2005 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-571-22513-6

Since the joyriding accident, 15-year-old Matt Norris's life has been hell. His brother, Jake, is dead, and Jake's girlfriend, Joolz, has been hideously scarred. Only Matt escaped the car crash unscathed. Or so it seems. Because now Jake is back, haunting Matt's every step, appearing out of thin air dressed in outrageous costumes. What does he want? Why does Joolz remember the accident differently? What exactly had happened? They'd all been too stoned to know. Riddled with guilt, Matt attempts a deadly reconstruction of that tragic day – and finds himself in a parallel world where the outcome of the crash was very different.

Paul Magrs

Strange Boy

Simon & Schuster 2002 Paperback £7.99 ISBN 0-689-83657-0

David is ten years old but growing up fast in a broken home in the north-east of England at the beginning of the 1980s. Afraid to trust his instincts and with his loyalties torn in two, he must face up to his childhood's end, his feuding family and his own burgeoning sexuality.

Millie Murray

Sorrelle

Livewire Books for Teenagers 1998 Paperback £4.99 ISBN 0-7043-4954-X

A novel which focuses on the relationship between a black teenage girl and her Asian boyfriend, who have to contend with the tension between their two communities and hostility from outside.

C. Z. Nightingale

Grass

Puffin Books 2003 Paperback £4.99 ISBN 0-14-131634-9

Sixteen-year-old Caryn witnesses a savage attack on an Asian boy by a white gang in east London. She doesn't know what to do as grassing is not the done thing. When Kobir, the victim, later dies, she can't avoid being involved. Should she grass or should she stay silent? The story reaches a dramatic climax and Caryn must learn to trust her own judgement of right and wrong.

Bali Rai

Dream On

Barrington Stoke 2002 Paperback £4.50 ISBN 1-84299-045-4

Baljit is a gifted young footballer with dreams of playing for a big team. But his dad wants him to get a real job, in a good profession like accounting or law. And when he's not studying hard, Baljit has to work in his dad's fish and chip shop. He wants more and secretly attends football trials, hoping to catch the eye of a Premiership scout. What will happen if Baljit's dad finds out and can an Asian kid really make it in the world of professional football? A story set around a warm and witty family that also looks at the wider issues of prejudice, friendship and growing up. *Dream On* was written for Barrington Stoke as an aid for reluctant readers of all cultures.

Louise Rennison

Startled By His Furry Shorts

Piccadilly 2003 Hardback £14.99 ISBN 1-85340-753-4

This is the latest book from the *Confessions of Georgia Nicolson* series. Follow teenager Georgia's hilarious antics as she desperately muddles her way through teenage life and all that it entails: make-up disasters, school, unsympathetic friends, highly embarrassing family and of course, boys...

Robert Swindells

Dosh

Puffin Books 2000 Paperback £4.99 ISBN 0-14-130023-X

Chivers Children's Audio Books 2001 Audiotape £23.44 ISBN 0-7540-5224-9

Every kid in secondary school is trying to earn extra money, but they must give ten per cent of their earnings to Push, the school protection racket. The kids band together to form Pull and refuse to pay.

Robert Swindells

Wrecked

Puffin 2001 Paperback £4.99 ISBN 0-14-131035-9

The lives of two 16-year-old boys are affected by growing fondness for alcohol. Mark is the son of a domineering manager of a brewing company; Dennis Clissold is the son of a deserted mother. The action unfolds in the course of a day or two either side of their GCSE results.

Matt Whyman

Columbia Road

Flame 2002 Paperback £6.99 ISBN 0-340-76905-X

Cash is hard to come by in Columbia Road, where Cisco, her uptight brother and her downbeat boyfriend struggle to make ends meet. Cisco's brother is realising that being a teen agony uncle has a shelf life and her man of the moment is lost to an online game with a million bucks at stake. That's when their landlord, a property impresario called Cartier, makes an offer they can't refuse: transform the place into a virtual show home, with a cam in every room and the three can stay on rent free. Except Cartier has a hidden agenda, and privacy comes at a price.

Benjamin Zephaniah

Gangsta Rap

Bloomsbury 2004 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 0-7475-6565-1

Ray has given up school. He sees no point in education and despises authority. And then he has no choice about school as he is excluded. But Ray also has troubles at home, which means he has nowhere to stay and ends up sleeping in the local record shop, owned by his friend Marga Man. Ray and his friends attend a Social Exclusion Project which means they can develop their music skills. Marga Man gets a record deal for them, and they become local heroes. But another rap band takes a dislike to Ray's music and gang warfare is the result.

Benjamin Zephaniah

Refugee Boy

Bloomsbury Children's Books 2001 Paperback £5.99 ISBN 0-7475-5086-7

Two countries are at war – Ethiopia and Eritrea. Alem's father is Ethiopian and his mother is Eritrean. Caught in the middle, they are seen as enemies of both sides. To save Alem's life his father takes him to London, leaving him in the hands of the Refugee Council and British justice system.

Teenage graphic novels

Paul Grist

Jack Staff: Everything Used to Be Black and White

Image Comics 2004 Paperback £19.95 ISBN 1-582403-35-X

Jack Staff is Britain's Greatest Hero, or at least he used to be. Twenty years ago he disappeared, and everyone just forgot about him. Except for Becky Burdock, Girl Reporter for The World's Press. She's investigating a series of murders in Castletown, but finds a lot more than she expected, including a long forgotten superhero and a secret that's been hidden for over 60 years.

Simone Lia

Monkey and Spoon

AdHouse Books 2004 Paperback ISBN 0-9721794-5-3

Explores the relationship of a married anthropomorphic couple in an all-too-realistic snapshot of their everyday lives. Can a monkey love a spoon? (and vice versa?)

Terry Pratchett

Guards! Guards!: A Discworld Graphic Novel

Gollancz 2001 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 0-575-07071-4

Some night-time prowler is turning the citizens of Ankh-Morpork into things resembling small charcoal biscuits. Captain Vimes is looking for a 70-foot-long fire-breathing dragon to help with his enquiries, and now readers can see this in all its glory in this graphic novel.

James Robinson

Illegal Alien

Titan Books 2003 Paperback £9.99 ISBN 1-84023-580-2

It's London, 1963. The Beatles are about to hit the big time, the Cold War is escalating, and Guido Palmano has just returned from America a changed man. His family can't quite put their finger on it, but Guido, a former mobster with little regard for anything outside his own self-interest, is a different person. He's caring, compassionate, intelligent... alien! Now, caught between the dangerous ties to his former life and the political hysteria surrounding a mysterious, crashed spaceship, Guido's doing all he can to give his loved ones the best time of their lives before his own time on this planet runs out.

Writers

Aisle16

Essex-based Aisle16 are Luke, Joel, Chris and Ross, who perform as a poetry boyband. From their humble beginnings in 2000, running a poetry club above a pub, Aisle16 have risen to become one of the most sought-after poetry acts in the UK. The poets take turns to take the audience through a series of PowerPoint micro lectures on different concepts and topics such as accepting pretentiousness, death, the author and love. Familiar headliners at the UK's major spoken-word events including Apples & Snakes, the Cheltenham Festival and the Manchester Poetry Festival, Aisle16 are equally renowned for their appearances in top comedy clubs, and for captivating crowds at the Glastonbury Festival. Their greatest success to date was playing to sell-out audiences in Edinburgh and London before being made one of *Time Out's* Critics' Choice of the year 2005. Aisle 16's poetry anthology *Live from the Hellfire Club* was published in 2005.

Diran Adebayo

Diran Adebayo was born in London in 1968 to Nigerian parents. He read Law at Oxford University and worked as a journalist on the London newspaper *The Voice*, before working in television as a researcher and assistant producer. The manuscript of his novel *Some Kind of Black* won the inaugural Saga Prize, set up by the actress and novelist Marsha Hunt for black-British writers. The prize included a publishing contract with London publishers Virago, who published the book in 1996. The book also won the Author's Club Best Novel of the Year award, a Betty Trask Award and a Writers' Guild Award (New Writer of the Year) in 1996. Other titles include *My Once Upon a Time* (2000), *Untitled Adebayo* (2004) *Underwords: The Hidden City: The Booktrust London Short Story Competition Anthology* (2005) Diran Adebayo is currently at work on a screenplay, *Burnt*, for FilmFour, and his third novel. He lives in London. www.theblessedmonkey.com

Patience Agbabi

Patience Agbabi is a poet, performer and workshop facilitator. She was born in London in 1965 to Nigerian parents and spent her teenage years living in North Wales. She was educated at Oxford University and has appeared at numerous diverse venues in the UK and abroad over the last 12 years. *R.A.W.*, her groundbreaking debut collection of poetry, was published in 1995, and won the 1997 Excellence Literary Award. Her poetry has been published in numerous journals and anthologies, including *Bittersweet: Contemporary Black Women's Poetry* and *IC3: The Penguin Book of New Black Writing in Britain*. Her most recent work, *Transformatrix*, a commentary on late 20th-century Britain and a celebration of poetic form, was published in 2000 to great acclaim.

Primarily a solo performer, Patience Agbabi has read repeatedly at major literature festivals in the UK, including the Edinburgh Book Festival and Ledbury Poetry Festival; and music festivals including Glastonbury and the Soho Jazz Festival. She has also worked extensively for the British Council, delivering her work in a range of venues, from university lecture theatres to a metro station, in countries including Namibia, 1999, the Czech Republic, 2000, Zimbabwe and Germany, 2001, and Switzerland, 2002.

Francesca Beard

Francesca Beard was born in Kuala Lumpur and spent the 1970s growing up in Penang, an idyllic island paradise off the coast of Malaysia. She now lives in London, performing poetry to audiences all over the world. Francesca has performed for the British Council in countries such as Azerbaijan, Bulgaria and Colombia and gone bravely into primary and secondary schools all round Britain. Her work features in many anthologies including *Kin: New Fiction by Black and Asian Women* (2003) and her self-published chapbook, *Cheap*, is now in its fourth imprint.

Malika Booker

Malika Booker is a writer and performer whose work spans literature, education and cross-arts. She has represented British writing internationally, both independently and with the British Council, in Slovenia (City of Women Festival), Italy, the US, Holland and Switzerland. In spring 2005 she was sponsored by Arts Council England for a three-month Writer Fellowship in Delhi, to have time to work on her debut novel.

Malika is best known for her writing, and performances of, intimate and engaging character monologues and poetry, which beautifully capture the contradictions and passions of modern living and transform personal insight into universal appreciation. She was a featured artist in KIN at the Barbican, a spoken word show of words, music and visuals produced by renaissance one in spring 2004, as part of the 'Only Connect' Festival. She was one of the touring poets for *Bittersweet*, featuring ten women poets who toured the UK in 1999–2000. In 2003 her work was featured in *Kin: New Fiction by Black and Asian Women*. She was a featured artist in *Modern Love*, a spoken word project on love and modern relationships that played to a capacity crowds at the QEH (South Bank Centre) in 2001. Malika has written two plays: *Catwalk* and *Unplanned*.

Charlie Dark

With flamboyant gestures and vocal gymnastics, writer, producer and DJ Charlie Dark has made a dynamic impact on the UK poetry and performance scene. As one-third of the band Attica Blues, the critically acclaimed hip hop inspired trio, Charlie had already established a reputation for pushing the boundaries of imagery and musicality by the time he entered the international poetry scene. In 2005 he edited *My Voice is Like* a poetry collection for teenagers. He has also toured around the globe, both independently and with the band, to places as far afield as Tokyo, New York and Berlin.

Shamshad Khan

Shamshad Khan was born and raised in the UK to parents from South Asia. She is Literature Adviser to Arts Council North West. Shamshad has co-edited an anthology of black women's poetry and a collection of peace poems for Crocus Books. Her poetry appears in anthologies and has been broadcast on BBC Radios 3 and 4. Her one woman performance, *Hard Cut*, was performed for Kosmopolis, at the Barcelona Literature Festival. Her verse theatre show, *Megalomaniac*, which toured the UK included music and beatbox from Jason Singh (collaborator Nitin Sawhney). Workshop and writing themes include 'women who dare' and 'the use and abuse of power'.

Nicholas Makoha

Nicholas Makoha is a dynamic writer and performer who specialises in the communication of stories. He has devised education projects for young people that make creative use of books in schools and is a mentor for the NESTA Ignite Project. He was commissioned to write a poem for Backthe Bid as part of the ongoing strategy for London 2012. For Black History Month he toured the Czech Republic with the British Council. As a founder member of Malika's Kitchen he has led workshops in Chicago high schools and has collaborated with musicians and visual artists, in a response to site-specific work for Apples & Snakes' project at the Pump House Gallery. His book *The Lost Collection of an Invisible Man* is published on Mouthmark press.

Roger Robinson

A leading light in the London spoken word scene and a 1999 selection for the National Portrait Gallery's New Generation Poets Collection, Roger Robinson has a range that embraces poetry, prose and music without losing the quality of sharp observation.

Roger has read poetry worldwide at venues such as Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), Literature Forum (Hannover), Barcelona University, Wordstock Festival (New York) and the New Jersey Performance Arts Center. As an MC, he has supported iconic hip hop groups

Run DMC and De La Soul, and his first collection of short stories, *Adventures in 3D*, was published in 2001 (Lubin & Kleyner) followed by his debut poetry collection *Suitcase* (2005).

Lemn Sissay

Lemn Sissay is the author of four poetry collections: *Tender Fingers in a Clenched Fist* (1988); *Rebel Without Applause* (1992); *Morning Breaks in the Elevator* (1999) and *The Emperor's Watchmaker* (2000). He is also the editor of *The Fire People: A Collection of Contemporary Black British Poets* (1998), and his work has appeared in many anthologies.

His stage plays are *Chaos By Design*, *Storm*, and *Something Dark*. Examples of his television explorations include a six-part jazz series for BBC2, and in 2004 he presented the first National Poetry Slam and *The New Brit* for the BBC. His work has featured in various short films including the British Film Institute-sponsored *The Elevator*, featuring Gary Lewis.

A documentary about Lemn's extraordinary life and search for his father, *Internal Flight*, was recently broadcast on BBC1. He has been commissioned to write poems by various bodies including the BBC World Service, and his work has become public art, particularly in Manchester, where his poems appear on buildings and streets. Lemn Sissay reads his work around the world and is featured on many albums, most notably *Leftism* by Leftfield.

Sophie Woolley

Sophie Woolley is a writer and performer. Specialising in written and performed modern-day Hogarthian-style satire, she lays bare the stinking underbelly of fashionable society. She has contributed to the publication *Shoreditch Twat*, and in October 2002 was featured on Comedy Lab's programme *Shoreditch Twat* on Channel 4. She has contributed to numerous publications including *Sleaze Nation*, *Marmalade Magazine*, *WIDE Magazine* and *Ammo City*. In 2005, Sophie wrote and performed for *Flight 5065*, a special midsummer's event presenting spoken word on the London Eye. She performs her work regularly with performances in 2004 and 2005 including the Cheltenham Festival, Eton College, the Barbican, the Museum of Garden History and Sadler's Wells.

Short film package

After Refuge

Claire Pope, 4 mins 4 secs, 2004

After Refuge explores the effects of immigration on cultural identity. Pari, a young refugee from Afghanistan, recounts her experience of fleeing her home country and settling in Britain; and of trying to find her new identity without losing her roots.

As Angry As Me

Tom Sheahan, 31 mins, 2005

The film follows the rise of punk rock duo 'Selfish Cunt' from their early gigs burning Union Jacks in protest at the war in Iraq, through critical recognition in the mainstream press to recording in New York and finally a concert at London's Brixton Academy. The film questions whether punk rock can be reinvented in the 21st century, whether performance can ever be political and what it really is that lead singer Martin Tomlinson is so angry about. The film paints a picture of London's underground art scene as it collides with the mainstream and questions whether any of these categories really mean anything at all.

Connecting

Dan Turner, 7 mins 15 secs, 2004

An overcrowded bus in rush hour is no one's idea of fun, but that's just the beginning of Gaz's problems. With phone abuse at a high, he finds it increasingly difficult to keep it together. But it shouldn't be too long. If he can just hold on a little longer... Too late!

Jump Boy

Menhaj Huda, 11 mins, 1998

'... and Brooklyn ain't in London!' Somewhere in deepest west London, we find a group of British-Indian boys leaving school on a typical Friday afternoon. Parading through the crowds of the high street, their hip-hop influenced, street-style fashion, language and attitude are in full display.

Scribble

Faisal A. Qureshi, 4 mins, 2004

A transcriber tries to deal with the failures of technology.

Seeker

Omelihu Nwanguma, Adam Hutchings, 10 mins, 2004

While living in London an immigrant resorts to desperate measures in a bid to convince his family back home that he is living the rich life they expect of him.

The Tardis

Rayna Nadeem, Stuart Bamforth, 5 mins 13 secs, 2005

Based around an underground London location known as 'The Tardis', this mini-documentary follows the lives of three young Asians who break the mould. The audience is invited into the recesses of this amazing subterranean complex which plays host to gangster and celebrity parties alike, and all under the ever-watchful eye of Jesus, the resident parrot!

Further short film information

The seven films selected for this programme range from immigration issues to the activities of young people on the streets, the menace of mobile phones, a punk rock group, technology and underground clubs. DVD screening rights have been obtained for showing the package in film clubs, libraries and other suitable art venues in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden and the Ukraine only. The films are being supplied on individual DVDs so programmers can show them in whichever order they like. There will be two sets available.

Any enquiries regarding purchasing copies of the DVDs should be addressed to the individual sales agents and/or production companies. Full details on each short can be found in the British Films Catalogue section on our website www.britfilms.com. Enquiries from other British Council offices regarding this package should be addressed to Film Department in London.

Geraldine Higgins, Film Programme Manager

Websites

Websites for project organisers

Some of these websites are for projects that have been completed, but we have included them as interesting ideas.

enCompassCulture

www.encompassculture.com

www.encompassculture.com/readinggroups/readinggroupideas/readingcities/

Books, booklists and reading groups' website including how to set them up, ideas to keep them going, how to twin with other groups, establish a reading city and teaching materials.

Bristol Reads

www.swreads.com.education.html

Building on the success of the Bristol city-reads programme, the Great Reading Adventure has expanded to include the whole of the south-west of England. The project aims to engage a wide range of people in reading a single classic book. Each year the book is different and hopes to bring communities together through the power of literature, encouraging more reading and writing by the widest range of people in Bristol and now the whole south-west of England. The chosen books, which have included Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* in 2003, John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids* in 2004 and in 2005, Helen Dunmore's *The Siege*, are promoted in the libraries. A free readers' guide is produced, and there is a short-story competition and a poster campaign. Schools and bookshops around the city are also involved.

Leeds City Poems

www.centrifugalforges.co.uk/web/pages/archive.html

City Poems was a project designed to create a living biography of the city of Leeds in Yorkshire, England. It came alive as readers moved through the city with their mobile phones, through a network of Poem Points attached to sites. These sites ranged from football grounds to art galleries and from parks and bars to local community centres, corner shops and busy bus stops. For each Poem Point readers sent a keyword as a text message and received a free short site-specific SMS text message poem to his or her mobile phone.

Liverpool Reads

www.liverpoolreads.com

Each year Liverpool Reads promotes events and reading based activities around a chosen title. For 2005 the chosen book was *Millions* by Frank Cottrell Boyce and groups of young people, schools, libraries, prisons and footballers showed their enthusiasm for reading and for getting involved in ongoing activities.

Penguin 7 Books for 7 Cities

http://readers.penguin.co.uk/nf/shared/WebDisplay/0,,214337_1_2,00.html

In 2005, as part of their 70th-year celebrations, Penguin launched 7 Books for 7 Cities. The project supported seven cities reading seven Penguin books to celebrate each decade of Penguin's existence.

The books and cities included:

Bristol – Helen Dunmore *The Siege*

Oxford – Evelyn Waugh *Brideshead Revisited*

Brighton – Lewis Carroll *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass*

Nottingham – D. H. Lawrence *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Northamptonshire – H. E. Bates *Fair Stood the Wind for France*

Hull – Jules Verne *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

Kirklees, West Yorkshire – Zizou Corder *Lion Boy*

Poems on the Underground

www.tfl.gov.uk/tube/arts/platform-for-art/pfaonline/

Information about Poems on the Underground posters including streamed poems.

Quick reads

www.niace.org.uk/quickreads/index.html

Quick Reads are bite-sized books written by some of the most well-known authors and figures in the UK. This website has lots of resources for teachers based around these books.

Football

Kick into reading

www.literacytrust.org.uk/football/RTGProjects/kir.html

Kick into Reading is a Literacy Trust project, in which football clubs, working with a storyteller, deliver stories to schoolchildren at their local libraries.

Reading the game

www.literacytrust.org.uk/football/index.html

Reading The Game is an initiative of the National Literacy Trust, which works with professional football to promote literacy and to raise reading motivation for all ages.

www.literacytrust.org.uk/football/RTGProjects/plrc.html

Fourteen league football clubs and 22 library authorities have joined forces to give children the opportunity to be inspired to read by famous footballers at their local club. The footballers nominate favourite books for the children to read in group sessions.

Websites for readers

enCompassCulture

www.encompassculture.com

Over 5,000 books with a discussion board, reviews, author chats and interviews, book of the month, online reader in residence and booklists. Also includes a comprehensive list of websites for readers.

Poems on the Underground

www.tfl.gov.uk/tube/arts/platform-for-art/pfaonline/

Poems on the Underground feature in this flash animation of London Tube Platform Art.

Urban Tapestries

<http://urbantapestries.net/>

Urban Tapestries aims to enable people to become authors of the environment around them.

What are you up to tonight?

<http://whatareyouuptotonight.com/>

Select books to for staying in with or for going out.

Blogs and discussions

Belle de Jour

www.belledejour.co.uk

Belle de Jour is the *nom de plume* of a high-class call girl working in London. Belle charts her day-to-day adventures on and off the field, in a frank web diary.

Baghdad Burning

<http://riverbendblog.blogspot.com>

Baghdad Burning by an anonymous Iraqi woman, has been turned into book form and was nominated for the prestigious Samuel Johnson Non-Fiction in April 2006.

Guardian blogs

<http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/culturevulture/>

The Guardian newspaper's Culture Vulture Blog includes arts, music, film, books and a book club.

Cult fiction

http://readers.penguin.co.uk/nf/shared/WebDisplay/0.,68043_1_12,00.html

Toby Litt's monthly cult literature choices.

enCompassCulture

www.encompassculture.com/discussionboards

www.encompassculture.com/chat

Talk about books to other readers around the world.

Activities

1 Alternative cover

Ask participants to choose several books from the *Reading the City* list. At the next meeting get them to discuss what kind of book they felt it was, how they would describe their response, the bit that engaged them the most, etc. When this has been done look at the cover of each book. Does the cover convey the contents? Could it be done better?

The task is then to equip each participant with a disposable camera and send them out into their town or city and capture an image that truly expresses what they think the book is about. You may get several, equally valid, interpretations of the same book and these can be used for further discussions and/or a display.

2 Soundscape

Choose a particular area of your town or city. What combination of music and spoken word best captures its mood? This can be run as a workshop activity or as a wider competition.

3 Flash fiction

So much is quicker in the city. We pass by dizzying amounts of information every day. The challenge here is for participants to write a story using no more than 300 words (a single page). You can see examples on www.telltales.co.uk/micro.html

The best results could be e-mailed around the city but they would also be ideal for posters on buses, trains (in the same manner as Poems on the Underground in London) or at stations and waiting or meeting points.

4 Urban prayers

This is a simple and fun way to enable a group to construct their own poem. In 'The Teacher's Prayer' by Allan Ahlberg we hear a wish list from a teacher:

*Let the children in our care
Clean their shoes and comb their hair;
Come to school on time – and neat,
Blow their noses, wipe their feet...*

What would a skateboarder's prayer sound like? How can technical terms such as ollie, shuv, kickflip, etc. be incorporated? You can also try the graffiti artist's prayer and the jogger's prayer.

This is a good exercise for exploring characters and lifestyles. As a group poem this exercise can be quick and funny with each participant contributing on line and the facilitator giving the first and the last line. Your poems do not have to rhyme!

5 The book exchange

Form book groups from different schools across your town or city. Get each group to read three to six titles from the urban culture list or similar. Each group should then meet to discuss the books, and then release the books via www.bookcrossing.com. Using the website readers across the city can track their books and compare comments.

6 Every picture tells a story

A group is assembled and given the task of taking pictures of objects, people, buildings, and strange details in your town or city. They can use either disposable cameras or mobile phone cameras to take the pictures. Another group are waiting to write a story that uses all the captured images. If using mobile phones the pictures could be sent to the writing group 'live'; if on prints they should be given to the writing group at the start of the workshop. In either case the workshop shouldn't last more than two or three hours so that participants work together fast to complete the best story they can using the captured images.

7 Cities of the imagination

What is your favourite fictional city? Which writer can really make a fictional city come alive to readers? Compose a list of six and with either an existing reading group or a new one explore these utopias and dystopias. For example you could start with any of the following;

J.G. Ballard *The Drowned World*

Melvin Burgess *Bloodtide*

Rupert Thomson *The Five Gates of Hell*

Jan Mark *The Eclipse of the Century*

8 Reading on the move

Do you have a regular journey to school, college or work? Why not use that time to set up a small reading group on your train or bus? With your friends or people you travel with regularly choose a book for all to read and then use your journey time for the discussion.

Don't forget to get off!

9 Tales of the city

What books have been set in your city? Which writers live there? Which city has had the most books set there? Which the least? Why? If you look at www.thedeckchair.org.uk you can see how many books have been set in Brighton & Hove in the UK.

Create your own lists and post the results on the encompass web boards (www.encompassculture.com). Find out who else has been reading your city!

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