



on the wall

Festival 2010

8th-22nd May



on the wall Festival

**Festival  
Guide  
Inside**

Celebrating 10 years on the edge



There's something about writing that seems to be at the centre of our existence as human beings. It's not just writing, it's art, theatre, film and performance; let's call it creativity – it matters to us to get our soul down on paper. It's hard to define, a little like WoW itself. When asked to say what kind of festival we are, we often start by saying what we're not. A literary festival? No. In parts, definitely; but not really. We never wanted to become another outlet for publishers. An active festival, not passive. Respectful, but not too polite. Celebrating the best of writing, but supporting people just starting out – celebrating the new; our guiding ethos is a belief in an untapped latent creativity in people.

Have we achieved that? It's hard to say, we're not necessarily the ones best placed to judge, but we've certainly stirred things up a bit and brought some of the best writers and artists to the city, and we've had our fair share of book launches and film and theatre premieres along the way. Too many highlights to list; some, like bringing Noam Chomsky to Liverpool for the first time jump out at you; winning an international award for our work in making short films with schools and young people; our own Liverpool Young Writer's group who are forging the way for the new generation, and many, many more.

But in many ways it's the small victories that matter; the woman who took part in our writing competition who turned up with a ring-bound folder that she writes in at her dressing table each night after she has got the kids off to bed - where else would she have come if not to WoW? And the communities we've worked with as partners, trying to give a voice to those often hidden below the radar – refugees, asylum seekers, the visually impaired, prison writing groups, tenants groups, and international communities whose voice is often drowned out by the wail of falling bombs.

We've had fun too; Irvine Welsh, a little the worse for wear, wandering round the city draped in a Brazilian flag in celebration of the England v Brazil world cup game; James Kelman risking turning the audience against him by trying to evict a drunken audience member; booking a Scottish ex-policeman (what were we thinking!) on his own recommendation, and watching in horror as he died on stage, his attempts at comedy sounding like something from the late 1970's. I'm not sure why all the funniest things involve Scots, but there you go. WoW exists and now celebrates its 10th year as a landmark cutting-edge festival in Liverpool for many reasons; the hard work of a committed band of trustees, volunteers and advocates; the skill and dedication of

our trustees and staff (both past and present) in securing funding and making it stretch and last; our funders themselves who have recognised the work we do and the value it brings to the city; the writers and artists who have been generous enough to provoke and entertain us, and, as ever, our audiences, who keep coming back year on year, providing us with the sounding board we need to know that it is all worthwhile. Our thanks to all who have worked for us, funded us and supported us in any way at all. We recognise and appreciate all contributions, and hope that we can stay fresh and creative, and keep bringing WoW's unique take on events to you for the next ten years.

### Tickets Special Offer:

100 exclusive 'Golden Tickets' available guaranteeing you access into all festival events - £35/£25 concessions

Contact WoW on **0151 703 0020** or email [info@writingonthewall.org.uk](mailto:info@writingonthewall.org.uk) for details and conditions.

### Special thanks to

**Paul Tarpey**, Editor and Journalist, **Robyn Donaldson**, Marketing supremo, **Sonia O'Rourke**, our very own gold supporter, **Michael Snowdon** and **Another Media**, design and distribution gurus. Special thanks to all past and present trustees, staff and project workers of Writing on the Wall who give so generously of their own time and commitment to ensure the success of the festival and our related projects: **Helen Millne**, **Stuart Borthwick**, **Jenny Newman**, **Mary Kelso**, **Penny Feeney**, **Kjell Eldor** (Trustees), **Madeline Heneghan** (Festival Director), **Mike Morris** (Project Manager), **Nikki Blaze** (Liverpool Young Writers Project Tutor), **Curtis Watt** (Kensington Creative Writing Project).

### Our Funders



The Granada Foundation

The Black And Racial Minority Network



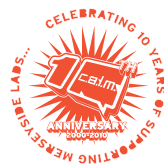
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2001

Bill Drummond

Sexanddrugsandrockandroll



Howard Marx

Should Crime Fiction Pay?



2002

### Breaking Boundaries

by **Madeline Heneghan**  
(Festival Director)



A friend of mine Ray, who is from one of Liverpool's long established black families, tells a story about his dad and another elderly relative, John, reminiscing about their youth. John mentioned a woman that he had a fancy for back in the day called Mary O'Leary. Ray asked if Mary was an Irish girl. 'No,' replied John. 'She was a half cast Chinee' (excuse the terminology). Now that story says a lot about Liverpool and how our communities have mixed and integrated on a family and community level for centuries.

Recent research has revealed that Liverpool's Muslim communities are unique in terms of the level of co-operation, integration and cohesion between the different factions of Islam. The research emphasised over and over Liverpool's *uniqueness*. But while we have this unique blend of families, cultures and beliefs, to the extent that the term 'dual heritage' is often inadequate to describe our children, comments are still made by visitors to the city about the lack of black people working in the city centre. Areas like Toxteth, and now Kensington are highly diverse but there are still parts of the city that are overwhelmingly white.

**"For some time now, WoW has been changing the nature of audiences at artistic events in Liverpool - younger, and more representative of the population - without losing us oldies."**

Dave Evans (award winning author)

The challenge for me when I came to WoW in 2005 was not just to interest communities in writing-based projects and events, but also to bring communities together to discuss ideas, current issues and to foster greater levels of understanding between communities. Bringing disparate groups together has been central to WoW's ethos since its creation in 2000, long before there was a

government agenda on 'community cohesion' and talk from national policy makers about divided and segregated communities.

At WoW, we didn't want to just hold black events that appeal to black people or Muslim events to bring in a Muslim audience, but to design activities that bring communities together, not just in terms of race but geographic communities and other communities of interest. We have had some real success over the years. When we brought Benjamin Zephaniah to the festival we had over 700 people, of all ages and backgrounds, in the Philharmonic Hall - an amazing achievement for a poetry event. By holding 'women only' events we have brought Arabic speaking women together with a group of women from Speke Garston Domestic Violence Project to listen to writer Haifa Zangana speak in two languages. In 2009, we held an event on the future of Palestine following the bombing of Gaza, which included an audience debate with members of Liverpool's Arabic communities, supporters of the state of Israel and the traditional left. While there was no final agreement on a way forward we certainly felt that a greater understanding was reached.

Our audience feedback tells us that we need to engage more with communities in North Liverpool and attract more people with disabilities to our events. We hold events in community settings from Kensington to Skelmersdale and the Wirral. We've built BLS interpretation into events when the budget has allowed, and also employed Advocates, who are well rooted in their own communities and peer groups, who promote our events and activities in a very personal way. There is a growing recognition that the creative sector and organisations like WoW can play a pivotal role in the regeneration of communities that have suffered economic and social deprivation. Comments from most of our festival guests tell us that, in our efforts to reach new audiences, we are on the right track.

### Rebel Ink

by **Niall Griffiths**

Writing IS rebellion. The pen's like one of Q's gizmos, a tiny gun. It can get you locked up (Solzhenitsyn, Dostoyevsky), executed (Lorca, Saro-Wiwa), or, less dramatically, help you to wipe the smirks off those self-satisfied faces that told you you'd only ever be fit for flipping burgers or cleaning the streets. The silently insidious totalitarianism we're living under now, in 2010 Britain, has attenuated writing to the extent that Literature now has become a middle-class coffee-table pursuit, judged by Richard and Judy and Oprah; all we get of the Word in most diurnal lives is an expression of approval or disapproval concerning Cheryl Cole's latest choice of dress. Each person who writes to celebrate and parade the lustful energy of the Word, spits at the capitalist imperative that measures worth by earnings, mans a metaphorical, but no less real, barricade.

**The scratching sounds of her pen on paper, the steady chipping away at prison walls**

Look at Thomas Hardy. Yes, Thomas Hardy; that grumpy ahl get with the muzzy who bored you to tears at school. His words had a seismic effect at the time; truly massive, the shockwaves that tore through a feudal and patriarchal and institutionally religious society when it read about the working class being made up of people, not servants; about women who suffered, immeasurably, before the indulged whims and endorsed vices of the men in the big houses; about the destruction of potential; and about a universe that wasn't simply indifferent to human endeavour but was actively, and maliciously, conspiring to thwart it. This, to a society that had convinced itself that it was especially blessed by God, was shattering.

**"Down their carved names the raindrop ploughs", he wrote. Even the letters on your tombstone will eventually vanish.**

Or - and this is a bit obvious, I know - look at the great drunks; Thomas and Behan and Bukowski and Yates, to name just four.



Their behaviour WAS their writing. Thomas's madly ecstatic poetry had the same sundering effect on staid collegiate America as did his pissed-up lechery and roaring; Behan bellowed in both voice and print about the humanity of the bogeyman 'terrorist', and made people realize that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter; Bukowski's life and writing eschewed rules, both social and syntactical, as a protest against any form of homogeneity and regimentation; and the speeches that Richard Yates penned for the Kennedy administration sought surreptitiously to prompt politicians into ameliorating the lives of broken dreams and smashed aspirations and the resultant heartbreak and misery about which he wrote in his novels and stories, and the contemplation of which drove him repeatedly to the asylum. Alexander Trocchi saw his junkie status as equal in political and creative importance to his position as a novelist; his jacking-up on TV was as offensive, in his eyes, to blinkered bourgeois sensibilities as were his books, which extracted dry and tweed-elbowed classicism from the spired and ivy'd universities and injected it into the lowly lives of canal tramps in Scotland (but he did also pimp his infatuated wife out to policemen as a way of avoiding arrest on drugs charges, so let's not get too gushy about him).

And the women, the women; you can't talk about writing as rebellion without mentioning the women. Aphra Behn, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell. Many, many more. I think - but I'm not certain - that it was Samuel Johnson who said of women novelists that it was like watching a dog walk on its hind legs; 'the wonder is not that it is done well, but that it is done at all'. So Mary Anne Evans wrote huge, sprawling, encyclopedic works under the pseudonym George Eliot and fooled them all; harrumph, they spluttered between their white whiskers, the poor woman must be hysterical. Only the male muscle can tackle such an enterprise. And Gaskell got her crinoline skirts dirty on the cobbles and docksides of Liverpool and Salford. And Virginia Woolf, as oppressed by the unalterable order of the passage of time as she was by the absolute control of her world by the masculine mind, splintered such

orders in her work, hacked at them, waged counterattacks on various tyrannies. That she couldn't successfully do this in her actual body was of course terrible and tragic, but, while she lived, the pen in her hand was a Molotov, the scratching sounds it made on paper the noise of steady chipping away at prison walls.

And take the simple uselessness of writing in a late-capitalist society; if it generates no money, then it's a worthless activity. So write until your wrist swells up. And if you do make money from writing, then keep a journal or a notebook, something which won't be read until you're dead, when the rain and the wind erase your name. Keep them so that you'll never forget what it was like to burn, burn to write; not to make money, just to make words. Dip your nib in anger. Look, again, at George; she rebelled, even, against the system of patronymic nomenclature. She cared nothing for fame or recognition. Any system is to be kicked against.

By **Susan Griffiths**

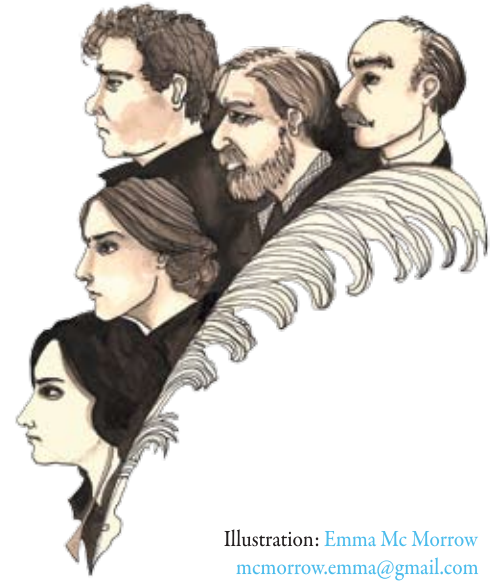


Illustration: [Emma Mc Morrow](mailto:mcmorrow.emma@gmail.com)  
mcmorrow.emma@gmail.com

Sir Thomas Hardy  
87 Gifford Way  
Stinsford, Dorchester  
Dorset, England

12th May 2010

Dear Mr. Hardy,

Thankyou for giving myself and my colleagues the opportunity to read your work. Rest assured that we gave it careful consideration, and found much to commend, but unfortunately we have decided not to proceed any further with it on this particular occasion; the opinion in this office was that your depiction of a malignant universe at war with human endeavour and pursuit of happiness, and the strings of concocted coincidences and misplaced letters and moments of mistaken identity etc. devised to achieve this end, ultimately failed to convince.

Forgive me contacting you by letter, but our office computers have crashed. And I do hope this letter reaches you - the postal strike is due to end next week, and I'm crossing my fingers that this, and your returned TS, do not get lost in the backlog. From your covering letter, I know how important your work is to you. I wish you the very best of luck with it elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,  
N. Griffiths





### Stereoviews to the World

David Jacques

“That he is a proficient photographer has never been in doubt. His stereoscopic work for them was satisfactory. But just before the company was bought out, the department he dealt with was closed down and they had to ‘let him go.’ Though there had been question marks against some of his submissions. The final series titled ‘Retail destinations’ was rejected due to a lack of specific information required from the imagery and accompanying text.

**In essence, they could have been shots of anywhere in the world, but it’s been muted that they were probably taken somewhere within a ten mile radius of his digs.**

His claim forms for expenses had also been attracting attention within the Admin Department. It’s led to reassessments of a number of stereoscopic works attributed to him in various archives.



The series in front of us has been produced in his capacity as a freelance - ‘unattached’. They would typically sit within the ‘Industry’ genre at first viewing. However, his notes offer an unexpected insight as to the situation we’re presented with.

He omits to reference the location (other than ‘between Gate 2 & Gate 5’) though we are obviously looking at an old Industrial complex of sorts. His assertions that the site had been evacuated could be plausible, “there’s not a solitary figure in evidence throughout all of the views.”

**Dave’s latest work, *Por Convención Ferrer*, was recently chosen for the prestigious 2009 East International Biennial Arts Exhibition. He presents ‘Stereoviews to the World’ at the festival on Wednesday 19th May (see listings pages for details).**

\*You can ‘free-view’ these stereoviews by crossing your eyes - the two images should splay into three. Then fall into focussing on the central of the three images. Adjust the distance between your eye-line and the image if necessary.

### RANKING NON STOP

# THE BEAT

One of the highlights of the festival will see The Beat return to Merseyside over thirty years after they first had us dancing and thinking. They were always a band set aside even from some of the great bands that were part of the 2-Tone Ska revival. Ranking Roger is now on lead vocals with his son Murphy “Ranking Junior” in the toasting role, such a key part of the band’s mesmeric blend of anger, hope and incessantly catchy tunes. Thirty years on you may expect a shadow of the real thing, but anyone who has seen them recently will tell you that this cynicism will be blasted out of your system as soon as they hit the stage. The tunes and the message will be ringing in your ears for a long time after. Ranking Roger and Everett Morton survive from the original line-up, and have forgone keeping The Beat’s spirit alive in favour of burning it even brighter. We spoke to Roger about why The Beat still have such an emotional hold over us.

**“We have always been seen as a working-class band and our lyrics have always been about real things that are going on now. One of our main messages has always been love and unity.”**

“The band were always quirky, but we had songs like Monkey Murder that sounded really happy but actually had pretty depressing subject matters. Within The Beat’s lyrics though there is always a ray of hope. There is always optimism. Certainly with the new tunes there is, but all that depends on the human race. I didn’t think in my lifetime I’d see Nelson Mandela released or the fall of the Berlin Wall so it is amazing how people can change things. If there wasn’t so much rage against nuclear weapons, which The Beat were a major part of, maybe we would have had a nuclear war.”

#### Where is the legacy of the Beat today?

“We are viewed as heroes now whereas in the past we would have struggled to be heard. I haven’t paid much attention because I’ve been getting on with my life but we probably played a part in stopping the spread of racism. People have told me they listened to The Beat or bands like The Clash and it helped them through college or whatever, and some of these people are actually in The White House now.

“People are still the same, maybe even more spiritual. We are not facing the immediate end of the world from war like in the past but it is time all the wars stopped. Oil is the

one thing that will give us a lot of grief but there is room for everyone on the planet and we are still in control of what happens - for now.”

**The Beat started life as an unusual cross generational mix with the legendary saxophonist Saxa joining the young Midlanders in the lineup. This tradition is maintained with the introduction of Ranking Junior. But how does the Ranking Roger of 2010 relate to a younger audience?**

“I think I’ve got a bit wiser. Everett is probably the same. When Saxa was there it was rare to see two generations getting on. He taught me always to be young at heart. So now I think young generations can see that, and they just take to us.”

**What would he do if he met long time nemesis Maggie Thatcher today?**

“When we did *Stand Down Margaret* she was the one with the keys to the button, so a lot of anger was directed at her. She isn’t now so I suppose I would try shake her hand. I don’t think she would shake mine though.”

The Beat play WoW, Saturday 15th May (see listings page 09).

2004

Laura Hird

Drinking Tales



Noam Chomsky

Sold-out event  
at Liverpool University



2005



# Festival Guide

## 8th-22nd May



### Tickets Special Offer:

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For more information, access or BSL signing information: contact Madeline on **0151 703 0020** or email [info@writingonthewall.org.uk](mailto:info@writingonthewall.org.uk) Website: [www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

### Saturday 8th May

**Festival Launch Party  
Celebrating WoW's 10th Birthday!**  
Studio 2, Parr Street, L1 4JN

Time: 8:30pm - till late  
Entry: £5/3 concessions  
Payable on the door

Come and celebrate 10 years of a festival on the edge with exciting performances, readings and cake. Birthday guests include award winning writer Pauline Melville, (Shapeshifter, The Ventriloquist Tale, Eating Air), poet Paul Farley, (The Boy from the Chemist is Here to See You, Ice Age and Tramp in Flames) and WoW new writers. Music to dance to provided by Kinda-a-Blue featuring Radio Merseyside's soul diva Mandy Smith. Hosted by the legendary Julian Daniels.

### Sunday 9th May

**In the Red - 8 Magazine Launch**  
The Chameleon Bar,  
7-9 Back Colquitt Street, L1 4NL

Time: 6pm  
Free

*In The Red* has hosted captivating and diverse writing with renowned names such as Niall Griffiths and Roger McGough. Now, celebrating the launch of our eighth issue, we give our writers and poets a chance to perform their work. If you want to be entertained by this year's best contemporary talent there is nowhere else to be, but *In The Red*. Special drinks offers at the bar.



### Tuesday 11th May

**China Miéville**  
The Brown Rooms,  
Liverpool Guild of Students,  
160 Mount Pleasant, L3 5TR

Time: 7pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
Payable on the door

China Miéville is two-time winner of the prestigious Arthur C. Clarke Award (*Perdido Street Station* and *The Scar*) and has also won the British Fantasy Award twice (*Perdido Street Station* and *Iron Council*). China will be reading from his 2009 novel *The City & The City*, an existential thriller published to dazzling critical acclaim, and his latest work, *Kraken*, a dark urban fantasy thriller, a work full of wild imagination, exciting action and vivid characterization. Witness China Miéville's own distinctive brand of urban adventure at its best.



Tuesday 11th May

**Bearing Witness to the 'pain of others'  
Reactions to Authoritarianism  
and Resistance**  
**The Casa, 29 Hope Street, L1 9BQ**

Time: 7:30pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
Payable on the door

Phil Scraton, Professor of Criminology at Queen's University, Belfast, perhaps best known for his tireless campaigning and research on the Hillsborough football stadium disaster, is currently serving on The Hillsborough Independent Panel, which will oversee the public disclosure of official documentation relating to the deaths of 96 football fans in 1989. Phil began his career as an academic in Liverpool, completing research on the inner-city uprisings of the 1980s. He is a founding member of the Liverpool Traveller's Free School, the Gypsy and Traveller Education Council, and Inquest. Author of over a dozen books on authoritarianism, the criminal justice system, social justice and children's rights, Phil's career has bridged the gap between the ivory tower and the communities that Universities are duty bound to serve.



Wednesday 12th May

**Blankpages Liverpool Showcase**  
**Leaf Tea Shop & Bar,**  
**27 Parliament Street, L8 5RN**

Time: 7pm  
Entry: £3/£2 voluntary contribution

Blank Media Collective's blankpages team descend on Liverpool for one night only for an evening of multimedia performance and interaction featuring Liverpool poets Cate Jacobs and Curtis Watts, and Liverpool artist Jack Welsh. Poetry will combine with site-specific found object installations and moving image work selected from the Blank Media Collective artists' database. Blankpages Poetry Editor, Baiba Auria, will deliver a rare reading of her poetic works, and there'll be a short poetry open mic at the top of the evening. Music by DBH and Darren Adcock, Manchester-based acoustic guitarists.

blankpages is a monthly digital magazine for promoting emerging art from Blank Media Collective, available for free download from:  
[www.blankmediacollective.org/blankpages](http://www.blankmediacollective.org/blankpages)



Thursday 13th May

**Book Launch: Love Hope  
and High Heels by Clare Campbell**  
**Blackburne House Café**  
**Blackburne Place, Hope Street, L8 7PE**  
Time: 7pm-9pm  
Free

**Poetry Workshop**  
**Reclaiming stories to heal and give hope -  
a sassy sexy storytelling workshop full  
of love and magic**  
Time: 10am-2pm  
Entry: £5, concessions by donation  
Payable on the door

In this first collection of magical poems, Clare takes us on a sensuous journey from the shadows of Liverpool Cathedral to the hot springs of California. Clare is a Liverpool artist, therapist and wild mistress of divine storytelling and love. With a radical and irreverent approach, Clare carries poetry into previously unreached audiences from prisons to housing estates, government conferences to dole queues, re-awakening lost dreams and inspiring a bigger vision of what is possible. Come along, laugh, cry, share and get loved up.



Friday 14th May

**A Rebel Rant with Bonnie Greer**  
**Obama – Is he doing it?**  
**The Contemporary Urban Centre,**  
**41–51 Greenland Street, L1 0BS**

Time: 7:30pm  
Tickets: £8/£5 available from:  
The philharmonic hall box office: 0151 709 3789  
Online: [www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

Bonnie Greer, award winning novelist, playwright, and author, deputy Chair of the British Museum and transatlantic social and cultural commentator, perhaps best known recently as sparring partner to the BNP's Nick Griffin in the most controversial Question Time of recent years, brings to Liverpool her unique voice. One year on, with the Republicans back on the offensive and health service reforms being diluted by the day Bonnie takes up the question Barak Obama – Is he doing it?

Bonnie's event is the final in 2009's Rebel Rants, a programme provoking debate on contemporary issues featuring, Martin Bell, Germaine Greer, Michael Mansfield & Darcus Howe. The programme has been a huge success, attracting audiences of over 1000 people.



Saturday 15th May

**Richard Milward and Joe Dunthorne -**  
**Apples and Submarines**  
**The Contemporary Urban Centre,**  
**41–51 Greenland Street, L1 0BS**

Time: 2pm -3pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
(includes entry into Robert Shearman)  
Payable on the door

Richard Milward exploded on the scene in 2007 as one of Britain's newest, brightest talents. *Apples*, his debut novel, was described by Irvine Welsh as one of the best he's read about being young, working-class and British. *Apples* gained Milward a place on the shortlist for the 2007 South Bank Show Times Breakthrough Award. Milward's second novel, *Ten Storey Love Song*, 'arty, dirty and very, very funny' *The Guardian*, confirmed his early promise.

Joe Dunthorne's debut novel, *Submarine*, traces the fortunes of Oliver Tait, "a typically sex-obsessed 15-year-old boy who lives in his own world". It has been translated into nine languages, and is being made into a film. His debut poetry pamphlet will be published by Faber in May 2010.



Saturday 15th May

**Robert Shearman**  
**Love Songs for Daleks**  
**Contemporary Urban Centre**  
**Greenland Street, L1 0BS**

Time: 4pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
(includes entry into Richard Milward  
and Joe Dunthorne Event)

Award winning short-story and television writer Rob Shearman, perhaps best known for his work as a screenwriter on *Doctor Who* (his episode, Dalek, was runner-up for a Hugo Award), joins Wow to read from his latest short-story collection *'Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical'*. His first collection *'Tiny Deaths'*, published by Comma Press, won the World Fantasy Award for best collection, was short-listed for the Edge Hill Short Story Prize and nominated for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Prize. Don't miss this unique voice whose writing has been described as 'by turns macabre and moving, horrific and laugh-out loud funny'. Be there, or be exterminated.



Saturday 15th May

**Music Panel - From Generation X to the X Factor; Real Music Lost in the Mix?**

**The Contemporary Urban Centre  
41-51 Greenland Street, L1 OBS**

Time: 6pm - 8pm

Tickets: £6/£4 concessions - available from:

The philharmonic hall box office: 0151 709 3789

Online: [www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

Special Offer: Tickets for this event and the 'Legends' gig have a combined price of £18/£10 concessions

An internet campaign came out of nowhere to propel Rage Against the Machine to the Xmas number one slot and give a bloody nose to the X Factor's ongoing campaign for world domination. But what does it mean for music? Our panel are ready to plug in, turn up the volume, and let it rip: **Don Letts** - The Rebel Dread DJ & broadcaster. **Kevin Sampson** - Writer and former manager of The Farm. **Jon Morter** - Instant Legend who set up the Rage Against the Machine Facebook Campaign. **Martin O'Shea** - Manager of Atomic Kitten. **Phil Hayes** - Manager of Liverpool's famous independent music venue 'The Picket.'



Saturday 15th May

**Legends**

**Levi Tafari, The Beat, Don Letts  
The Picket, 61 Jordan St, L1 0BW**

Time: 9pm - 2am

Tickets: £14/£8 concessions available from:

The philharmonic hall box office: 0151 709 3789

Online: [www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

Special Offer: Tickets for Music Panel

and this event have a combined price of £18/£10 concessions

WoW are delighted to present this monster of a night at the city's best music venue:

**Levi Tafari**, Liverpool's favourite lyrical observer and urban griot. **The Beat**, with hits like Mirror in the Bathroom, Can't Get Used to Losing You, Hands Off She's Mine, The Beat are one of the most popular recording acts in UK. Original band member Roger Rankin and Everett Morton are joined by Roger's son Murphy Rankin Jr, and Mickey Billingham, formerly of Dexy's Midnight Runners. **Don Letts**, (Big Audio Dynamite, BBC 6 Radio), the original Rebel Dread takes to the decks for a rare Liverpool performance.



Sunday 16th May

**Luke Brown - When will I, will I be Famous? Independent Publishing and Getting Your Work in Print**

**The Contemporary Urban Centre,  
41-51 Greenland Street, L1 OBS**

Time: 2:30pm - 3:30pm

Free

If you're already writing what you really want to know is; how do I break into the mysterious world of publishing? Luke Brown, Editor at Tindal Street, will be talking about the trials and tribulations of independent publishing and giving advice on what it takes to get your novel in print. Luke Brown has published authors including Catherine O'Flynn and Anthony Cartwright. Tindal Street Press is a prize-winning independent, famed for its tiny size and Birmingham address and for regularly reaching the major prize lists. Tindal Street won the 2009 Costa Prize First Novel Award for Raphael Selbourne's *Beauty*.

Pulp Idol Final starts after this event at 4pm (see page 13 for details)



Sunday 16th May

**The DPM Crew - Vandals or Van Goghs?**

**Contemporary Urban Centre  
Greenland Street, Liverpool, L1 OBS**

Time: 2pm Live Graffiti exhibition,

5pm-6pm Discussion

Free

In 2006 five members of graffiti collective the DPM Crew were given custodial sentences for conspiracy to commit criminal damage. The investigation took four years and cost £5 million. On the day they were sentenced the TATE Modern housed an exhibition celebrating street and graffiti art. The international media debate that followed the sentencing asked whether it was right to jail young artists and raised questions about the acceptance of graffiti art in modern society with the rise of celebrated illegal graffiti artists such as Banksy and the exploitation of graffiti by advertisers looking for 'street cred'. Ironically, while doing time the crew were commissioned by the prison service to paint graffiti murals on vehicles and community walls. Here four members of the DPM crew join WoW for a live graffiti exhibition, followed by a sit down discussion on their treatment and experiences of the justice system and the future of graffiti art.



Sunday 16th May

**The Cipher present Lowkey**

**The Contemporary Urban Centre,  
41-51 Greenland Street, L1 OBS**

Time: 7pm till late

Entry: £3

Payable on the door

Building on the success of their gigs over the last two years performing alongside Sway, Skinnyman and Bashy, this year The Cipher are stepping it up a gear to bring to you rapper and hip hop artist Lowkey. He is a London based activist of English and Arab decent whose lyrics are inspired by his humanitarian work in Palestine. Make sure you get with the Cipher for raw music, lyrical knowledge and hop hip poetry.

The Cipher are a group of highly talented, award winning, young writers, rappers and artists based in Liverpool. Their focus is on original high quality, high energy creative work. If you're 11-19 yrs, interested in writing, rapping and performing, then The Cipher is the place for you. Check us out on Facebook - Liverpool Young Writers and Supporters



Monday 17th May

**Talking Musical Revolutions**

**Studio 2, Parr Street, L1 4JN**

Time: 7.30pm

Entry: £5/£3 concessions

Payable on the door.

Gavin Martin, NME scribe and music critic for the Daily Mirror brings his legendary music and spoken word event Talking Musical Revolutions on the road from London and into the Pool of Life. An evening dedicated to the most famous - and brilliant - pop rock combo to ever come from Liverpool, England, Britain, the world in general: The Beatles. Paul, George, John and Ringo won't be there in person. But the spirit of what they did and the meaning of what they left behind will be prised open, praised, sung and argued over. Get here early for this one-off night of a legendary event.

Appearances by: Dean Johnson; Phil Thornton (in a Beatles wig); Ian Prowse; Paul Du Noyer; Clarissa Pouncer; Marianne Hyatt; Zoe Street Howe; Gavin Martin; Colin Hall; Dean Johnson will sing the astonishing Silence and there will be Fabs and Fabs related music all night long and more, so much more.





Tuesday 18th May

### Is this England?

**Anthony Cartwright and Helen Walsh**  
**The Casa, 29 Hope Street, L1 9BQ**

Time: 7.30pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
Payable on the door.

Race riots, the BNP on the prowl, British-born Moslem's in Guantanamo, Asians under attack, worn out councillors, teachers and teaching assistants, world cup football and a Sunday League race war, A Tamil Princess and families falling apart and fighting for survival in an ever changing country– Is this just Warrington and the Black Country, or Is this England? Two of the hottest young writers in Britain today, Anthony Cartwright (*The Afterglow, Heartland*), and Helen Walsh (*Brass, Once Upon a Time in England*), will be reading from their work and discussing issues of race and identity in England today.



Wednesday 19th May

**Art and rebellion -**  
**Stewart Home and David Jacques**  
**Blackburne House,**  
**Hope Street, L8 7PE**

Time: 7.30pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
Payable on the door

Stewart Home is an artist, theorist and writer whose oeuvre covers non-fiction work on utopianism, situationism, psychogeography and punk rock, and a diverse range of experimental popular novels with titles including, *69 Things to do with a Dead Princess*. Stewart will be reading from his 1991 book *Defiant Pose* and his recently released novel *Blood Rites of the Bourgeoisie*. David Jacques is a Liverpool-born artist whose work focuses on hidden histories and the struggles of ordinary and extraordinary people. With 'Stereoviews to the World' David presents his latest work, an enigmatic experiment with the centres and peripheries of human vision with a series of eye-bending 'stereoviews', images designed for the cross-eyed and curious.



Thursday 20th May

**Ted Polhemus, Phil Thornton**  
**and Sara McEwan -**  
**Whatever happened to street style?**  
**3rd Room, The Everyman Bistro,**  
**5-9 Hope Street, L1 9HB**

Time: 7:30pm  
Entry: £3/£2 concessions  
Payable on the door

From the Teddy Boys of the 1950s to the ravers of the 1990s, Britain's fashion-conscious pop tribes once lead the way. But does today's domination of the high-street by global leisure brands signal the end for sartorial creativity in youth culture? Or do recent developments such as emo and the anti-style of the so-called 'scene kids' mean that there will always be a street style hovering just beneath the radar of the main fashion houses? Join Ted Polhemus (Curator of the V&A's 1994 exhibition 'Streetstyle: From Sidewalk to Catwalk, 1940 to tomorrow', and author of *My Generation: A Biography of the Baby Boomers*), and Phil Thornton (Editor of *Swine*), and Sara McEwan, a fashion designer inspired by music and pop culture, who believes that street style is highly influential, for a night devoted to you street fashionistas.



Thursday May 20th

**Another Time, Another Place**  
**Photographic Exhibition**  
**The World Museum Community Base**  
**Gallery, William Brown Street, L3 8EN**

Opening times: 9am-5pm  
Exhibition: Thursday 20th May – Friday 18th June  
Artist Introduction: Monday 24th May, 6pm till 8pm

Kirkby industrial estate at its peak provided 80% of all employment within the area. Recent figures show that the figure is barely 20%. Those areas on the 'edge' of Liverpool that were combinations of urban and industrial environments are now in danger of being forgotten. There is a wider problem in that so much history seems solely to do with what happened 'yesterday'; the instant society in which we live does not require any act of remembering. Steve Higginson and Ian Morris, tutors at the Merseyside Trade Union Education Unit, have developed the above project in order to re-establish the idea of 'collective memory' that is related to collective identity and shared experience. Through utilising both text and imagery, the intention is to ensure that even though a post-industrial world is with us, the solidarity and interdependent voices of Kirkby are not hidden nor silenced.



Friday 21st May

**Roddy Doyle**  
**The Casa, 29 Hope Street, L1 9BQ**

Time: 7:30pm  
Tickets: Tickets: £5/£3 concessions.  
Available from: The Philharmonic Hall box office  
0151 709 3789 online at [www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

The opening novel of Roddy Doyle's comic Barrytown Trilogy, *The Commitments*, made him a household name as he brought to life Dublin Soul, Jimmy Rabbitte and the likes of Joey The Lips Fagan. Roddy won the Booker Prize in 1993 for *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*, and is the author of fourteen novels and a collection of short stories and has written for stage and screen and a piece of none fiction, *Rory and Ita*, a memoir of his parents. Roddy will be reading from *The Dead Republic*, the third novel in his acclaimed Henry Smart Trilogy.

Stick around for a bit of a craic after Roddy Doyle's event to hear some of the best Irish Traditional music from Liverpool-based Irish trio, *The Wicker baskets*.



Saturday 22nd May

**Pub Crawl**  
**Peter Kavanagh's, Egerton Street**  
**(off Catherine Street), L8 7LY**

Time: 7.30pm

It's not the leaving of Liverpool....Oh yes it is! We're leaving the festival and heading to foreign climes, with Niall Griffiths (Grits, Sheepshagger, Real Liverpool), returning with or without his 'Sheila', to lead the merriment with readings from his forthcoming memoir/travelogue, 'Ten Pound Poms', based on his experiences of life down under when his family took advantage of the ten pound voyage and sailed off to Australia. Niall will be joined by a host of writers and poets all reading original work about times away from Liverpool. Always a popular event, get to the bar early clobber and register now for the crawl by contacting the WoW office:  
[info@writingonthewall.org.uk](mailto:info@writingonthewall.org.uk)  
Tel: 0151 703 0020



## Publishing the Damned

Alan Maher

(Publishing Director of Tindal Street Press)

Tindal Street Press has grown from a small writing group in Birmingham to become a prize winning publishing house. Named after the street where the group originally met, its aim was to publish quality and distinctive literature by authors who had made the mistake of not pandering to the whims of England's capital city. Alan Maher, the publishing director at Tindal Street, explains how they have achieved these aims and continue to thrive and excite.

**“the aim was to find regional talent missing the faulty radar of London publishers”**

When we started in 1998 we were aware the London literary and publishing world was uninterested in ‘the regions’. The culture was very metrocentric and this prejudice either marginalized or ignored the cultural products outside the ring of the M25. I’m delighted to say that ten years, on the reverse is the case. Everyone in London publishing is interested in the exciting new fiction from Tindal Street Press. And so they should be.

Birmingham had a dreadful reputation for culture. London comedians laughed at the accent, complained about Spaghetti Junction, that was it – ho, ho. It had a much worse image problem as a city than Liverpool. I should know – I’m from Huyton and the Scouse diaspora gets everywhere, but the Brummie dispersal isn’t so successful. Anyway, we knew that books by really good writers from our region were getting turned down by London publishers because the setting was unacceptable in literature (Couldn’t you set your crime novel in Shepherds Bush instead?) This kind of regional indignation prompted us to publish the stories of a Midlands writer, Alan Beard, who had been turned down by the big publishers. It got the best reviews in all the broadsheet press. Point proved.

Ten years on we have achieved our aims beyond our wildest expectations. We’ve broadened our remit outside the West Midlands, and out of 49 titles 14 have been

listed for national prizes. Three for the Man Booker Prize, 2 for the Orange and 2 Costa First Novel winners. But I can’t pretend we’re the only game in town. We’re a very small part of the national literary output. Larger publishers in London publish lots of superb books we would be proud of. We haven’t got all the answers, but we do amazingly well for our size.

**“for me, given where I’m from, and what I write about, it makes perfect sense that I’m with Tindal Street. To use a football analogy, it feels a bit like when players come through the ranks at their local club. The truth is, though, right now I’m with them because they’re great publishers.”**

Anthony Cartwright

(Author of *Heartland* and *The Afterglow*, Tindal Street 2009) \*Full article available online at [www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

Each year that you survive helps the whole enterprise. We’ve been lucky enough to have regional Arts Council funding and it has been consistent across the decade. Without that, we could have closed down during lean years. As a not for profit arts organization we can’t be taken over or acquired as a business. Remaining solvent and having a coherent and imaginative list are the main challenges. It is also advisable not to be too inward looking. If you focus only on your own region then you exclude the rest of the country who may not be so interested. Also your local market may be limited. There are only two bookshops in Birmingham now, and they’re both Waterstones. Clearly Birmingham people don’t buy as many books as people in the South East (that’s what our sales figures show) so we wouldn’t survive doing local books for local people. And maybe the people you want to reach can’t afford to buy lots of new books. That’s why you have to export your books to the rest of England.

**“there was a sense of common purpose shared by author and publisher with Tindal Street; their realistic expectations were not exclusively market driven, fashionable or metropolis-oriented, which perhaps allowed for greater artistic freedom”**

Raphael Selbourne

(Author of *Beauty*, Tindal Street 2009)

Publishing’s a very complex business and it changes all the time. Nothing stands still. If you aim for continuous improvement then you can’t go far wrong. If anyone were to set up an independent press now, they’d have to be clued in to the new digital forms. Publishers don’t really know what the future of the book is and how radically reading and buying habits will change. Everything has changed with the advent of e-books. But good quality literary content is always needed. I already feel proud of the books we will publish in 2011.

## Inspiration

by Kevin Sampson

(Writer of *Awaydays*, *Powder*, *Clubland*, and *Stars are Stars*)

If pushed I’d say *Stars Are Stars* is my favourite of my own novels. The title of the book, and the inspiration for it in many ways, is the Echo & The Bunnymen song of the same name.

**The lyric “stars are stars and they shine so hard - all your dreams are hanging out to dry” says so much about the hopeless experience of teenage life in the early 80s.**

For me, the definition of teenage is hope and dreams; you have your whole life ahead of you, it’s exciting, a little bit frightening, adulthood is knocking at the door but the world is yours for the taking.... and then you realise that the Tories are systematically squeezing the life out of everything that is joyous about Youth. They want you to get your head down, stand in line, wait your turn, pull your socks up, don’t answer back.... well fuck that. Thank our lucky stars this is Liverpool and we didn’t and would never stand for it. That’s also what inspires and runs through the book - Liverpool’s wilful refusal to lie down. The seeds of *Stars* can be found in the Bunnymen song. But the indomitable spirit that flows through this city and its people is the inspiration for everything I do.



## The most dangerous man in Britain?

Jon Morter



### Jon Morter is the man behind the campaign to get Rage Against The Machine to number one last Christmas.

Simple story...A man with a regular job decides along with his wife Tracy to challenge a massive beast of a corporate machine armed with a web page and a slightly unhinged idea. Wins. He is now taking on the challenge to stop the BBC cutting Radio 6 and the Asian network from their remit. Has he changed the way we campaign forever? He is probably too unassuming to admit to anything of the sort so maybe we will leave the story to him.

**“everyone will have their favourite Christmas song already so let's go for a loud, shouty metal tune with expletives”**

I don't work in the music industry so my experience was as an outsider and it just seemed like a very closed business and overly reliant on reality shows. That's all fine in its way, but the sheer domination of these 'pick up, put down' artists seemed wrong.

The Christmas chart had always been a lot of fun and in recent years it had become the one that record companies always tried to get. But with the X Factor having this three-month advertising space it had become a procession of manufacturing-line artists that no-one had heard of before who would grab Christmas Number One, then usually just disappear. Why should we have the same thing every year? I suppose I just snapped. I thought if no-one else is going to try why can't I have a number one? Unfortunately I can't sing, play music or dance so I thought using the net and Facebook I'll try with someone else's record. I decided to go for what was the antithesis of a Christmas song, which I did get criticized for, but I thought everyone will have their favourite one already so let's go for a loud, shouty metal tune with expletives. How mad would that be?

I was balancing a nine-to-five job and three kids but I thought let's give it a go. All the information was on Facebook so we just pushed people to join. After that it was just really spidering on the web. We got to about a 150,000 people joining which was when Shaun Keaveny on Radio 6 gave us a call and said “this looks like a good idea”. Then Radio 5 got in touch the following morning, and I spoke to Nicky Campbell. I didn't think that was our target audience but people could see what we wanted to do. I kept making it clear it was nothing personal against Simon Cowell but after the radio publicity, he was asked what he thought of the campaign. He said it was cynical and stupid. At that point the Facebook group went crazy. It went from 150,000 to probably half a million. This is what really could have done it. Then Rage Against The Machine gave a performance on Radio 5 and it went stratospheric. It was likened to Bill Grundy and The Sex Pistols. Even the likes of Dave Grohl and Paul McCartney said they supported it. The group peaked at 1.1 million.

We even had a problem with the Facebook group disappearing because the traffic was too heavy. Companies all wanted to create their own Rage Against The Machine-X Factor websites and I refused them all. There is a responsibility there, I have had offers from companies to take the group off me, which obviously wouldn't be right. The great thing about the net is it can be democratic but a cool head is needed. With the Radio 6 campaign about twenty groups appeared and obviously people aren't stupid. If something is worth shouting about they will, but it is very easy to see if people are making an effort because anyone can just set up a page. The key thing is whether you are really going to do it and stay actively involved. With the likes of Facebook, Myspace and Twitter if you want to make a point then you can, you can find a supermarket's page and have a go at them. But there is a risk groups can splinter and if they don't communicate they are not going to go anywhere. With the Radio 6 campaign I am aware we are in a privileged position but we still have to communicate. If there is decent group out there then don't compete, get people to join.

## YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION

**“people getting together and talking about music and revolution in a pub”**

Talking Musical Revolutions is a London based monthly spoken word and music event. featuring writers, poets, a DJ and live musicians. “Everything is permitted, nothing is forbidden.” Each event is themed in a manner designed to spark imagination, discussion and enthusiasm. And maybe even rebellious intent. The event now takes place in Shoreditch, hosted by music critic Gavin, who has moved in the short space of thirty years from *Alternative Ulster* Fanzine to *The Daily Mirror*. It pulls an impressive audience for a spoken word event on a Tuesday night. It is down to the libertarian but strict governance of Gavin and a well-chosen series of guests. Gavin explains more about the workings of TMR.

“The perfect TMR would be where participants from the audience took a short poetry slam style opportunity to read something they had written or meant something to them germane to the event. Everything has surprised and enlightened, people have been very generous in what they have given.”

TMR and the WOW festival seem like perfect cohorts and Gavin has no real fears about how the event will travel.

“My only fear is that the corporate mps and developers who have hijacked the tremendous Mersey river front will have completely blocked it in so no one can get up or down. It may be that the Parr Street gathering is more volatile, and bring it on. It's all verbal, no bottles. I hope it's lively and instills debate. I am looking forward to the whole thing and how the tremendous Alan Ginsberg poem about The Beatles goes across. I'm excited that Dean Johnson is now liberated from the shackles of Apple corporate restraint and will perform live. It's also about what happens after it, people getting together and talking about the event in the pub, making connections. It's really a mulch bed of cultural dissemination dissent and disaffection growing into something real and substantial.”

Danny Morrison

In Conversation



Brian Patten

Brian Patten's 60th Birthday



## Pulp Idol Competition: First Chapters

“Winning Pulp Idol 2009 gave me some much needed confidence in my writing ability. The heats were great fun and the judge’s feedback was fantastic. I would advise any new writer to have a go and get their writing out there!”

**Katie Myers** (winner of Pulp Idol 2009)

Pulp Idol returns celebrating five years of supporting and promoting new writing with its unique competition aimed at dragging would-be novelists out of their garret and into the public eye. If you’re working on a novel and want to get yourself into the running to meet up with a publisher and maybe see your work in print, then this is the competition for you. There will be a series of heats followed by a final (details below). All writers read for three minutes and get asked a few questions before facing the decision of the judges.

Judges for the Pulp Idol Final include **Luke Brown** (Editor, Tindal Street)

**Prizes:** Winner meets a publisher and also receives a place on a five day writing residential at Ty Nywdd, The National Centre for Writing in Wales. All finalists will have their work published in a book of First Chapters by our sponsor RayRoss Printers.

Free entry to the competition by application only. All details including terms, conditions and entry forms available for download at:

[www.writingonthewall.org.uk](http://www.writingonthewall.org.uk)

**Heat - Monday 10th May**  
The Communiversity, Altcross Road  
Liverpool, L11 0BS  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

**Heat - Tuesday 11th May**  
Unit 4, The Engine Room  
14 Westgate Mews,  
Skelmersdale, WN8 8AZ  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

**Heat - Wednesday 12th May**  
The Casa, 29 Hope Street  
Liverpool, L1 9BQ  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

**Heat - Wednesday 12th May**  
New Brighton Community Centre,  
Hope Street, Wallasey, CH452  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

**Heat - Thursday 13th May**  
The Kuumba Imani  
Millennium Centre, 4 Princes Road,  
Liverpool, L8 1TH  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

**Final - Sunday 16th May**  
The Contemporary Urban Centre,  
41–51 Greenland Street,  
Liverpool, L1 0BS  
Time: 4pm – 6pm

Monday 26th April

### Preparing for Pulp Idol

**The Kuumba Imani**  
Millennium Centre,  
4 Princes Road,  
Liverpool, L8 1TH  
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Get your mind, body and text ready for presenting to the Pulp Idol judges with this session to be delivered by Author and creative writing teacher, Jenny Newman, and Hip-Hop Artist and trainer Nikki Blaze. The session will cover a range of issues, including preparing your chapter for reading and breathing and relaxation techniques. All entrants welcome.

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