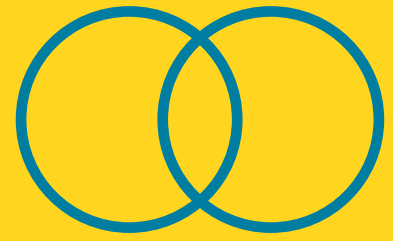


SURVIVORS' POETRY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

NUMBER 6



A SURVIVOR MAY BE DEFINED AS A PERSON WITH A CURRENT OR PAST EXPERIENCE OF PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS, A RECIPIENT OF ECT, TRANQUILLISERS OR OTHER MEDICATION, A USER OF COUNSELLING SERVICES, A SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL ABUSE, CHILD ABUSE AND ANY OTHER PERSON WHO HAS EMPATHY WITH THE EXPERIENCES OF SURVIVORS.

YOUNG VOICES NORTH-EAST SEMINAR

"YOUNG VOICES SPEAK OUT!"

A one day seminar
on Wednesday 24th November
10am - 5pm
at Northern Arts, 9-10 Osborne
Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon
Tyne, NE2 1NZ.
Seminar fee £25, concessions
available. Full disabled access, SLI's,
disabled parking.

Survivors' Poetry's second seminar
bringing together health, education
and arts sectors is planned for
Wednesday 24th November 1999.

The 1 day seminar will explore
training and employment issues

facing young survivors of mental

distress within the arts. The seminar
will look at current provision,
including innovative projects which
highlight the partnerships forged
between statutory services, arts
bodies and the education sector.

This seminar is aimed at education,
health practitioners/ workers,
service providers, arts organisations,
funders, community or voluntary
organisations.

To book your place contact Alison
Smith at Survivors' Poetry on 0171
916 5317.

DARTINGTON BOOK LAUNCH SUCCESS

The Pillar of Fire - selected poems
by Nikolay Gumilyov, a survivor,
was launched at the Dartington
Festival to an attentive audience.
We are delighted to report that it
has just been reviewed in the Times
Literary Supplement by John Bayley,
husband of Iris Murdoch. So, beat
the rush and get your copy . See
inside to get 25% off cover price.
Photo shows Peter Jay (Director at
Anvil) and Clare Douglas (Director at
Survivors' Poetry) at Dartington.



Inside:

- ~ Full details of New Network Groups
- ~ Camden Writing Workshops
- ~ Somerstown performances
- ~ The Poetry Cafe readings
- ~ Lapidus news
- ~ Competitions and events
- + what sort of a newsletter do you want?

WELCOME TO THE SURVIVORS' POETRY NETWORK

Survivors' Poetry aims to reach out to as many survivors of mental distress as we can in our work. In spite of the prevalence of mental distress - affecting one in four people at any time - prejudices and misconceptions regarding mental ill health are still rife in our society. Survivors' Poetry works to reduce this prejudice by offering survivors opportunities to give creative voice to their experience through writing workshops, performances and publishing.

The Survivors' Poetry Network enables survivor poets from all over the country to work together in producing and promoting their poetry. We are building a national network of survivors' writing

groups and work in partnership with local and national arts, mental health, community and disability organisations. There are now SP groups across the UK.

Individual groups benefit from being affiliated to the Survivors' Poetry Network in several important ways: promotion and publicity of group events through the Survivors' Poetry Newsletter, access to relevant training, advice on the running of workshops and funding opportunities, one year's free membership of The Federation of Worker Writers & Community Publishers and, of course, the opportunity to share ideas and information with other like-minded writing groups. If you belong to a

writing, poetry or storytelling group (or are thinking of setting one up!) and would like more information about joining the Survivors' Poetry Network, please contact Alison Smith on 0171 916 5317.

Just a quick reminder: we are still waiting for several of last year's Network groups to return their completed affiliation forms. We must have your details soon if your group wishes to continue being a member of the SP Network. You know who you are ... you have been told! Hope to hear from you soon.

Members of the Survivors' Poetry Network -October 99

BRISTOL SURVIVORS' POETRY
26 Bradley Avenue Shirehampton
Bristol BS11 9SL
Contact: Steve Hennessy
(0117 983 2790)

The 20-strong group runs regular writing workshops (last Thursday of each month, 2-4pm) and a theatre project, 'Stepping Out Theatre Co.'. Aims: "To help local survivors develop their writing".

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP AT CAST
37-39 Kings Terrace
London NW1 0JR
Contact: Harriet Craven
(0171 383 5228)

The women-only group (8 members) produces an anthology and magazine articles. They meet weekly on Mondays at 1-4.15pm. Aims: CAST (The Creative and Supportive Trust) "offers women opportunities to develop skills and knowledge".

KALEIDOSCOPE CREATIVE WRITING

GROUP
Education Unit
40-46 Cromwell Road
Kingston-Upon-Thames
KT2 6RN

Contact: Helen Sidey
(0181 549 2681)

The group (8 members) meets weekly on Thursday afternoons to write (games and small scale DTP) and enjoy visits.

Aims: "To develop writing skills and have discussions".

LITTLE RUNNING DEER
33c Bredgar Road
London N19 5BW
Contact: Jenny Tolerton
(0171 687 0754)

A new weekly group, still in the planning stage. Contact Jenny for more details. Aims: "To write poems and perform: to help survivors express their experiences".

MENTAL HEALTH ACTION GROUP
Floor 1 St Paul's Chambers
St Paul's Parade
Sheffield S1 2IL
Contact: Tim Jones
(0114 273 7666)

Please contact Tim for details of the writing group.

SCARBOROUGH SURVIVORS
9 Alma Square
Scarborough YO11 1JR
Contact: Lindy Herrington (01723 501049)

Scarborough Survivors is a resource centre run for and by people with mental health problems. A new poetry group is being planned. Contact Lindy for details. Aims: "To support, listen, inform, campaign and educate".

SURVIVOR ARTS (WALES)
Suite 31
North Parade
Aberystwyth SY23 2JH
Contact: Steve Craine
(01970 626230/ 626229).

The group (25 members) meets fortnightly on Mondays (7.30-11pm) for workshops, performances, conferences and events. There is a regular newsletter and theatre group.

Aims: To provide a "safe environment, self-help and mutual support...to promote creative expression".

STRAUSS WARD POETRY GROUP

St.Barts Hospital
West Smithfield
London EC1A 7BE
Contact: Jim Taylor

The patients' group meets weekly on Wednesdays. The ward has produced three booklets of poetry written by members. Aims: To "facilitate the expression of thoughts and feelings"

CANTERBURY CENTRE WRITING GROUP

The Canterbury Centre
Waterden Road
Guildford, Surrey
Contact: Michele Gibbs
(01483 577020)

The group (20 members) meets once a month on Mondays at 10.30am-12.30pm. Members share their writing and their memories and enjoy regular readings by published writers.

Aims: "To give people confidence to express themselves in writing or orally".

FULHAM AND CHELSEA SURVIVORS' POETRY

The Tamworth Project
11 Farm Lane,
London SW6 1PU
Contact: Lloyd Lindsay
(0171 736 9123)

The group (50 members on database) holds weekly writing workshops. Fulham and Chelsea Survivors' Poetry also publish a poetry magazine, 'Mind the Gap'. Aims: "To promote and discuss poetry by and for survivors of mental distress".

LEICESTER POETRY SOCIETY

18 Welland Street
Leicester LE2 1DP
Contact: Emma Hooper
(0116 256 7074)

Established for over 30 years, the society meets every Friday (7-9.30pm) at Leicester Adult Education College. Members can perform their own work, listen to guest poets and contribute to an annual anthology. There is an annual open competition. Aims: "To promote and encourage all aspects of contemporary poetry".

MANCHESTER SURVIVORS

Commonword,
Cheetwood House
21 Newton Street,
Manchester M1 1FZ
Contact: Clare Prendergast
(0161 226 8264)

The 15-strong group meets weekly on Mondays (2-4pm) for writing workshops and performances. Aims: "To write in a safe, supportive environment".

MILTON KEYNES CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

35 Brora Close
Bletchley
Milton Keynes MK2 3HD
Contact: Sheila Wells
(01908 367 849)

The group meets fortnightly on Fridays (11am-1pm) for writing workshops and advice on getting work published. Aims: "To encourage people to put onto paper their fears, worries, joys and anxieties".

S.D.M.H.A POETRY GROUP

112a Southchurch Road
Southend-on-Sea
Essex SS1 2LX
Contact: Norma Trigg
(01702 601123)

The new group will meet weekly on Mondays to read and write poetry. Norma is keen to hear from survivors interested in joining the group. Aims: "Enhance imagination, openness of thought and expression through poetry".

SURVIVORS' POETRY SCOTLAND

30 Cranworth Street
Glasgow G12 8AG
Contact: Wallace MacBain
(0141 357 6838)

Survivors' Poetry Scotland runs a range of writing workshops throughout the week (both daytime and evening). Nomad- the magazine of SPS- publishes new writing by survivors. The SPS performance group has appeared UK-wide in theatres, hospitals, community halls, pubs and cafes. Aims: "To help people express themselves through their writing."

WORD FOR WORD
c/o 49 Thirlmere Road
Muswell Hill

London N10 2DL
Contact: Margaret Bark
(0181 444 8424).

The 20-strong group meets weekly in term times (Wednesdays, 1-3pm). There are regular workshops and monthly readings/criticism of members' work. Aims: "To stimulate creative writing, to perform locally and to encourage new members".

MILTON KEYNES CREATIVE WRITING GROUP have published their first poetry collection! The book was launched at the Milton Keynes Mind MGM in September. The group are currently composing poetry and stories for their next book (there seems to be no stopping them!). A monthly newsletter is being produced and the group have recently been awarded a MIND Millennium Award to enable them to buy new computer equipment. For more details about the book and the group please contact the above number.

Editorial (see back page for more!!!)

Survivors' Poetry Newsletter is a quarterly publication. Its purpose is to publicise events and activities organised by Survivors' Poetry and by Survivor-led Poetry groups all over the country and to offer a forum for debate in which to share and discuss information and experiences. Please send us articles, small features, photographs, artwork and events listings about your group or about anything that you think may be of interest to our readers. Work should preferably be typed or on disc. We cannot guarantee publication and the editor reserves the right to edit any contributions. No more than 500 words. No poetry please. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of Survivors' Poetry. **Next copy deadline (for Jan/Feb/Mar issue) Thursday 23rd December 1999.** *Designed and edited by Lisa Boardman (Information Worker)*

« DATES FOR YOUR DIARY » EVE

WRITING COMPETITIONS

BASTILLE CALL; POEMS FOR A REPUBLIC
Delhi London Poetry Quarterly invites poems on the theme of the English Republic or the Republic of Great Britain from poets resident in the U.K. or Northern Ireland. Poems should not exceed 108 lines.
Entry Fee: none. Contact:
50 Penywern Rd., London, SW5 9SX.
Closing Date: 14 Nov. 1999.

KENT AND SUSSEX POETRY 2000 OPEN POETRY COMPETITION
For poems not exceeding 40 lines by poets over 16 years old.
Entry Fee: £3 per poem. Contact:
13 Ruscombe Close, Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells, TN4 0SG.
Closing Date: 31 Jan. 2000.

THE LIBRARY OF AVALON POETRY COMPETITION
For poems up to 50 lines on any subject.
Entry Fee: £3 for first poem, then £2 each additional entry. Contact:
The Library of Avalon, 2-4 High St.,
Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9DU. Closing Date: 6 Nov 1999.

NEW WRITER 3RD ANNUAL POETRY PRIZE.
Two sections, one for single poems up to 50 lines and one for collections of 6-10 poems by poets who have not yet published a first collection.
Entry Fee: £3 per poem. Collections - £10 per collection. Contact: P.O. Box 60, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 2ZR.
Closing Date: 20 Nov. 1999.

THE PETRA KENNEY POETRY COMPETITION
For poems not exceeding 80 lines.
Entry Fee: £3 per poem. Contact:
1B The Crescent, Filey, YO14 9HZ. Closing Date: 1 Dec. 1999.

RHYNES, RIVERS AND RUNNING BROOKS POETRY COMPETITION.
For poems up to 50 lines on the theme of rivers. The winning poet will appear on BBC Radio 4's Open Country programme. Poems may have already been published in a magazine or journal but not in a collection or anthology.
Entry Fee: £4 for the first poem, then £3 each additional entry. Contact: Blue Nose Poets/ Common Ground, Rivers Poetry Competition, 61 Athelstan House, London E9 5PH.
Closing Date: 27 Nov. 1999.

RIPLEY POETRY ASSOCIATION OPEN POETRY COMPETITION
for poems up to 40 lines. Special discretionary local prize.
Entry Fee: £2 per poem for up to 6 poems.
Contact: Alison Bennett, Flat 10, Fair Acres, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9BT. Closing Date: 15 Jan. 2000.

ROBOOTH PUBLICATIONS AND VOICE AND VERSE MAGAZINE NEW BEGINNINGS POETRY COMPETITION

for poems not exceeding 40 lines on any subject relating to new beginning e.g. starting again, new love, new life, millenium, etc.
Entry Fee : £2 for 1, 3 poems for £5, 4 poems for £7, 5 poems for £9. Contact:
7 Pincott St., London, SE4 2ER. Closing Date: 30 Nov. 1999.

SCINTILLA POETRY COMPETITION
no length limit, single poems may be submitted while sequences and long poems are especially welcome.
Contact: Dr. Peter Thomas, Scintilla Poetry Prize, ENCAP English, University of Wales, P.O.Box 94,Cardiff, CF1 3XB. Closing date: 1 Jan. 2000.

SECOND LIGHT POETRY COMPETITION FOR WOMEN POETS AGED 30+
poems on any subject not exceeding 80 lines. Entry Fee: £2.50 one poem, £6 for three, £10 for seven. Contact: Dilys Wood, 9 Greendale Close, London SE22 8TG. Closing Date: 1 Nov. 1999.

SPIRITUAL POETRY COMPETITION.
For poems on spiritual, religious or mystical themes not exceeding 40 lines. Two categories A. individual poems.
B. collections of 6 to 10 poems.
Entry Fee: A £2.50 per poem or three for £5. B- £10. Contact: Hilton House, 39 Long John Hill, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 2JP. Closing Date: 30 Nov. 1999.

TAVISTOCK AND DARTMOOR WRITERS OPEN POETRY COMPETITION AND MINI SAGA COMPETITION.
Two competitions, poetry for poems up to 50 lines and mini sagas which must be exactly 50 words (title can be up to an additional 10 words).
Entry Fee: £2 per entry. Contact: TWDW, P.O.Box 17, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 6YF.
Closing Date: 31 Dec. 1999.

THAT'S LIFE POETRY COMPETITION
for humorous, amusing, satirical poems, anecdotes and cartoons. Entry by A4 page which may contain up to 3 poems, anecdotes or cartoons, or any combination of the three.. Maximum lines per page 40.
Entry Fee: £2.50 per A4 page. Contact: 62 Willowhale Green, Aldwick, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 4LW. Closing Date: 8 Nov. 1999

POETRY LIFE: 16TH OPEN POETRY COMPETITION.
Entry Fee: £3 per poem. Contact: 1 Blue Ball Corner, Water Lane, Winchester, Hants., SO23 0ER.
Closing Date: 11 Dec. 1999.

Somers Town

Somers Town Community Centre,
150 Ossulston Street,
(off Euston Road), London NW1
7.30pm - 10pm (doors 7pm)
Admission: £3.50 (full),
£1.50 (conc) £1 (floorspots/ current inpatients)

Saturday October 23rd 1999
A multi-cultural event featuring
Brian Docherty and Joon.
Saturday November 27th 1999
John Lockhart and Kath Tait.

Floorspots welcome for both the above events. Arrive early to book your place.

Poetry Cafe Readings

Poetry Cafe,
22 Betterton Street, WC2 9BU
(nearest tube Covent Garden)
7.30pm - 11pm
Admission £2, £1 conc.

Friday 29th October 1999
Friday 26th November 1999
Friday 10th December 1999
"Christmas Party"

All welcome. A wonderful opportunity for new and more experienced poets to have their work heard in a friendly and supportive atmosphere ... and have a drink or food at the same time. Book your floorspot on arrival. There is a lift to the lower floor and a wheelchair accessible toilet. Smoking upstairs, non-smoking downstairs. Something for everyone!

YOUNG VOICES SPEAK OUT!

A one day seminar
on Wednesday 24th November
10am - 5pm
at Northern Arts. 9-10 Osborne Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1NZ.
Seminar fee £25, concessions available. Full disabled access, SLI's, disabled parking.

To book your place contact Alison Smith at Survivors' Poetry on 0171 916 5317

Competitors must write independently to each competition, enclosing an s.a.e. for an entry form before submitting work. Each competition charges an entry fee. Thanks to The Poetry Library for providing us with this information

Camden Workshops

The Garden Studio, Diorama Arts Centre, 34 Osnauburgh Street, London NW1 3ND. Nearest tube: Great Portland St. or Warren Street 7.30pm: Alternate Tuesdays Free

Survivors' Poetry holds fortnightly workshops for survivors. These provide participants with an opportunity to have work reviewed and discussed in a friendly, supportive environment. Two facilitators will be present at each session. Participants of feedback workshops should bring along a poem typed or clearly handwritten) from which we can take photocopies.

Tuesday 19th October 1999
Creative Writing Workshop. "Using everyday language" with Alison Clayburn (Chair of Lapidus) and Hajra Quresh (Hajara is interested in working with poetry, creative writing and particularly in constructing the texture and intonation of words).

Tuesday 2nd November 1999
Performance workshop. "Come and take this opportunity to try out or improve your performance skills in a supportive atmosphere". with Isha and Duncan Hamilton. Isha is an experienced MC, performance poet, ex-actress and dancer. Duncan is a member of Fulham and Chelsea Survivors' Poetry.

Tuesday 16th November 1999
Feedback workshop (bring a poem!) with Hilary Porter (Camden Workshops Co-ordinator and co-founder member of Survivors' Poetry) and Elvera Desouza.

Tuesday 30th November 1999
Feedback Workshop (bring a poem!) with Amita Patel and Duncan Hamilton.

Tuesday 14th December 1999
Creative Writing Workshop with Durlabh Singh (a widely published poet appearing in numerous anthologies and magazines including Asian Times and Eastern Eye) and Lisa Boardman (Survivors' Poetry).

THE HOUR OF SAD CHOICES

Tuesday 26th October 1999, 8pm, Conway Hall, 26 Red Lion Square, Holburn

Tickets £10 on the door, concessions available

A unique presentation of Pushkin's poetic sketches by a Russian-English ensemble.

Andrei Bitov, an eminent Russian writer, together with DM Thomas, acclaimed poet and novelist who has translated Pushkin's work into English, will perform versions of Pushkin's sketches accompanied by Alexander Alexandrov and Vladimir Miller, composers and jazz musicians who have played and won awards internationally. Guest musicians and a video installation will complete this tribute to Russia's greatest poet whose bicentenary is celebrated this year.

Ivor Gurney "Author, Composer, Soldier-of-a-sort" (1890 - 1937)

Purcell Room, Royal Festival Hall, 3pm. Sunday 31 October 1999.

Tickets £10 (Concess. £8) Box office 0171 960 4242.

A portrait in words and music of the First World War poet with Malcolm Sinclair, Jan Carey, Ian Partridge, Jennifer Partridge.

In February 1915 Ivor Gurney went to the Western Front and turned to poetry as a means of expression. His first book of verse, *Severn and Somme*, was published in 1917. Gassed at Passchendaele, he was invalided home only to suffer a breakdown. He returned to the Royal College in 1919, produced *War's Embers*, followed by two years of great creativity. However, his mental condition worsened and in 1922 he was admitted to an asylum. He continued to write and compose but never recovered, dying of tuberculosis in December 1937.

GUMILYOV BOOK OFFER

25% OFF COVER PRICE
FREE POSTAGE

(usual price £12.95)

SURVIVORS' POETRY PRICE
£9.95

ONLY UNTIL 1ST DECEMBER
'99

Nikolay Gumilyov

"A God-inspired master craftsman cut down in the very morning of his poetic mastery"
MARINA TSVETAYEVA.

The Pillar of Fire and Selected Poems

translated by Richard McKane.
Introduction and notes by Michael Basker.
Published by Anvil and Survivors' Poetry

NIKOLAY GUMILYOV (1886-1921) was famous for two reasons other than the enduring power of his poetry: his turbulent, short-lived marriage but lasting relationship with Anna Akhmatova, and his death at the age of 35 at the hands of the Bolsheviks. He was Russia's first literary martyr of the communist period, a victim of Lenin's 'Red Terror', shot in 1921 for alleged complicity in an almost certainly non-existent plot against the state. His writings remained banned until the emergence of glasnost in the late 1980s.

"..his poetry always retained that strange insouciance, a mixture of gay spontaneity and absolute technical assurance ..."

John Bayley, *Times Literary Supplement*

To order your copie(s) please send a cheque or postal order, for £9.95 per copy. Cheques should be made payable to "Survivors' Poetry". Please include your name and address on a separate sheet and send the above to:

"Gumilyov Offer" Survivors' Poetry,
Diorama Arts Centre,
34 Osnauburgh Street,
London NW1 3ND

This offer is only available until 1st December 1999

POPAN

POPAN (Prevention of Professional Abuse Network) provides a free and confidential service to people who have been abused by social and/or healthcare professionals such as doctors, psychologists, nurses and psychiatrists.

The abuse reported may be emotional, sexual, financial or physical or indeed a combination of these. POPAN workers listen carefully as people relate their experiences, help callers to clarify their feelings and discuss their possible options. Ongoing emotional support is offered whether clients wish to make a formal complaint or not.

POPAN hosts regular meetings in London to enable users of the service to benefit from mutual support. A quarterly newsletter is available as well as a number of leaflets including 'What to expect when you go into therapy,' 'What is Professional Abuse?', 'How to Make a Formal Complaint', and a recommended booklist including self-help and academic books.

The office is open Monday to Friday between 10am and 4.30pm except for Wednesday mornings. For more information please call 0171 622 6334 or write to POPAN, 1 Wyvil Court, Wyvil Road, London SW8 2TG.

Mind Annual Conference

Blackpool

9-11th November 1999

The Mind Annual Conference will bring together users and providers of mental health services, policy makers, researchers and carers.

Over the three days the Conference will focus on:

- promoting well-being and combating discrimination
- building quality mental health services
- supporting social care for active citizenship
- influencing policy and practice

There are a number of free places at the Conference. Please contact the Mind Conference and Training Unit, Granta House, 15-19 Broadway, London, E15 4BQ

(Tel. 0181 221 9672).

The Write Stuff

Watch out for a new London Arts Board guide for writers with disabilities. The book takes a practical approach and includes suggestions on how to approach companies to produce your work. Currently being produced.

'ReachOut'

Crisis launched a major campaign called 'ReachOut' at the end of August to help homeless people with mental health problems. They are looking for homeless people with some experience of mental illness (anxiety, sleeplessness, depression etc.) who would be interested in supporting and raising public awareness of this campaign by telling their stories. Anyone interested in taking part should contact John Fulcher at the Crisis Press Office on 0171 655 8383.

Calling All Female Poets in the East Midlands Area

East Midlands Shape are co-ordinating a new project called 'Fusion'. Starting in January 2000, 'Fusion' aims to bring together a disabled or survivor female poet with a nationally renowned artist. EM Shape are looking for a poet who incorporates the spoken word on stage. For further details please contact Lucy at EM Shape on 01509 634992.

All day in Derby

Sunday 17 October 1999

The Victoria, Midland Place, Derby Derby Mind, Southern Derbyshire Hearing Voices Network and the Derby Manic Depression Fellowship self help group are supporting a day-long event to complement World Mental Health Day. There will be bands, poetry readings and lots of other entertainment.

For further details contact Steph Carter of Derby Mind on 01332 772300

Global Words in Leeds and Manchester

Global Words is a new joint initiative

involving the Commission for Racial Equality and the National Year of Reading. It is intended to inspire young people to read, through an exciting programme of creative writing workshops and live literature events. Contact them at the CRE Campaigns Department, 10-12 Allington Street, London SW1E 5EH. These two events follow a London launch in early October.

Tuesday 2 November 1999 7.00pm

Entry £3 (full) £2 (conc)

The West Yorkshire Playhouse
Playhouse Square

Quarry Hill Leeds LS2 7UP

(Box office 0113 213 7700)

The poets Anjum Malik and Patience Agbabi are among a starry turnout.

Thursday 11 November 1999
8.00pm

Entry £3 (full) £2 (conc)

The Green Room

54-56 Whitworth Street West

Manchester M1 5WW

(Box Office 0161 950 5777)

This promises a splendid poetry-filled evening with contributions from performance poets Lemn Sissay and Shamshad Khan as well as Jackie Kay (author of The Adoption Papers) and the playwright and poet Maya Chowdhry.

Kidscape conference on bullying, suicide and self-harm

Thursday 11 November 1999 9.30am to 3.30pm

at the Law Society, London.

Cost £125 plus VAT includes a 260 page book Preventing Bullying. Further details from Lisa Flowers on 0171 730 3300

Spread the Word to all south London poets

Spread the Word is a literature development agency based in south London. They are running an experimental poetry day at Battersea Arts Centre on a Saturday in November still to be decided. It will involve using chance-generated, intuitively generated and found source texts; writing in response to found material and/or visual stimuli and site-specific writing. Reach them at

Unit 51b Eurolink Business Centre,
49 Effra Road,
London SW2 1BZ
Tel. 0171 207 2025.

Black women's creative writing course

Wednesday to Saturday,
24 to 27 November 1999
£45 (full) £15 (conc)
TS2K, Bernays Grove, Brixton
London SW2

A four day writing course covering both poetry and fiction and aimed at both new and experienced writers. It is designed to free the imagination and help participants develop voice, imagery, story lines and character. It is run jointly by TS2K and Spread the Word. Further details from Spread the Word on 0171 207 2025.

The Therapeutic Uses of the Literary Arts - A One Day Conference held at the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Sussex with LAPIDUS, 3rd July 1999.

by Victoria Field

Fifty people attended this conference - if there had been more space, it could have been filled twice over, leaving little doubt that interest in the literary arts and personal development is increasing.

The individuals attending reflected the multi-disciplinary nature of the work - therapists and therapees, workshop leaders and workshop attenders, writers, publishers, students, teachers and academics - with some people falling into all the above categories. Papers included reports on empirical research, hands-on how-to sessions and theoretical papers. I was particularly impressed by an account by Angela Morton on how she had written an extraordinary sequence of poems on the theme of Lazarus following a severe depression. A session on story-telling with Sharon Jacksties of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture and their Families also made a strong

impression on those who attended. One recurrent theme was the continuing difficulty in defining terms. It became clear as the day went on, that terms such as 'the literary arts' and 'therapy' are far from unitary concepts. Writing- as-process and writing-as-product have whole sets of differing assumptions underlying them and for the other literary arts, the assumptions will be different yet again. All the discussions were lively and stimulating.

Plans are already underway for next year's conference. there is an active London Regional Group and plans for other groups in other parts of the country.

Membership of Lapidus - The Association for the Literary Arts in Personal Development - is open to anyone with an interest in the

November 1999, 1.30 - 4.30pm at Diorama Arts Centre. The subject is: "Betterness - why do we write? Focus on groups and their (differing) writing goals." There will be a small charge of £2 for Lapidus members, £3 for non-members, to cover room hire, tea and coffee and administration expenses. If you would like to attend, please contact Alison Clayburn (Lapidus London Local Convenor) by 13th November on 0171 231 0243.



Lapidus members Christina Dunhill and Graham Harthill at the Lapidus conference in July.

subject and costs £10 per annum
- please write to the Secretary, BM
Lapidus, London WC1N 3XX

The Lapidus AGM

will take part on Saturday 4th
December 1999 at Diorama Arts
Centre, 34 Osnaurgh Street, London
NW1 3ND.

This day will be an all day event
with a speaker in the morning.
Please contact Lapidus for more
information.

London Lapidus Local Meeting

will take place on Saturday 20th

WHO'S WHO AT SURVIVORS' POETRY

TRUSTEES

Jim Green
Richard Hallward
Danielle Hope
Roger Moulson
John O'Donoghue (Chair)
Anne Rouse
Julian Turner
Scott Verner

STAFF

Lisa Boardman
(Information Worker)
Clare Douglas
(Director)
Alison Smith
(Outreach Co-ordinator)

ADDITIONAL KEY WORKERS

Alistair Brinkley
Peter Campbell
Jenny Ford
Roy Holland
Isha
Mala Mason
Emma Parish
Kit Parke
Amita Patel
Hilary Porter
Dave Russell
Xochitl Tuck

ADVISORY GROUP

Paul Beasley, Christina Dunhill,
Kwabena Gyedu, Miriam
Hastings, Mimi Khalvati, Jane
Law, Peter McDonald, Emma
McMullen, Andrew Pinnock,
Richard Sutton.

Survivors' Poetry is funded by:
The Arts Council of England
London Arts Board

We are very grateful for the financial
support of:

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
City Parochial Foundation
Esmee Fairbairn Charitable Trust

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"THE VALUE OF SURVIVORS' POETRY IS THAT IT OFFERS OUR
EXPERIENCE A VALID VEHICLE FOR EXPRESSION.
IT GIVES PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO CLAIM BACK SOME OF
THE DIGNITY AND SELF-RESPECT PREVIOUSLY TAKEN FROM
THEM". ~ A SURVIVOR ~

IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE EDITOR TO YOU, YES YOU !!!

This newsletter is distributed to at least 1,500 survivors all over the UK (and that doesn't include the ones who chance upon it in their local arts centre or library!). What's an awful lot of people who love poetry just like you.

Survivors' Poetry would like to give you the opportunity to contribute your ideas and share your personal experiences about surviving mental distress and about your relationship with poetry.

We would like your newsletter to contain stories about YOU, how you came to write poetry? what writing means to you? what scares you most about showing your poetry to others or about performing to a crowd? have you overcome your fears? where and how you were first published? what do people do in poetry workshops? how you set up a local writing group? how

you would like to set one up or join one? how you overcome writer's

block?

With your help we would like to develop the newsletter to contain the following:

- A letters page (a platform for controversial debates!),
- a regular feature on favourite individual and group writing exercises, (for you or your local group to try),
- reviews of Survivors' Poetry events
- book reviews,
- tips on getting published and, in each issue,
- to introduce a different local writing group from Survivors' Poetry's Network and include samples of their work.

Tell us what else you would like to contribute and your ideas for anything else you would like to see regularly on our pages.

**CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING
FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE AND
BRING THESE PAGES TO LIFE!**

Please contact Lisa Boardman on 0171 916 5317 or send in your contributions covering any of the above to our usual address. Maximum 500 words. (see Editorial for deadline).



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PROMOTING POETRY BY SURVIVORS OF MENTAL DISTRESS