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| NAME: | Francoise, Renee-Jeann Battin |  |
| Profile: (Tell us about yourself; how long have you been writing? What inspires you to write? how long have you been a member of Watford Writers? What are your favourite reads?) | I come from a writers family (father, brother both published) in France. I only started considering writing last summer though I wrote poems and stories as a child and adolescent. As a woman, I did not feel confident enough to put pen to paper (or computer). I have only just joined Watford Writers. I have a lot of ideas and I am just starting to write a "novel". I have several chapters started, and a narrative arc though no clear beginning or ending as yet. | |
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| Do you have a special place in which to write? | No. I can write anywhere (for as long as I can stay inside my head bubble) and if the ambient noise is not too loud. Currently I write in bed, on the computer, in the library or in cafes in relatively calm atmosphere. | |
| Do you have a preferred time of day for writing? | No, any time I feel inspired to do so. I keep an exercise book in my bag and someone just gave me a dictaphone. I like walking by the lakes and that will be a great addition to speak ideas and dialogues as I walk. | |
| Have you been published or have self-published? (Please list your publications) | No | |
| Do you have any special techniques for writing? Specialist equipment or writing aids? | Not really. I write on paper first then on the computer, editing, correcting and changing the writing as I go along. I have noticed that since I started writing, sentences fully formed come into my head, sometimes in the middle of the night, so I write them quickly to revise later. I do endless re-writing and corrections, and use both a Thesaurus and the Oxford English dictionary. I have started to do research for aspects of my writing. I also use Wikipedia for some things and also borrow books from the library. | |
| Have you been involved with any other writing activities? (e.g. workshops, organising writing events, attending external workshops, retreats?) | I attended a trimester of beginners creative writing at West Herts college. I have learned quite a lot. I am planning to join again in April for another trimester, though I am planning to leave it at that afterwards. | |

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| What writing project are you currently working on (or intend to start)? | I have started writing a novel, with a working title. I had a lot of problems deciding whether to write in French or English. I chose English but my story mainly takes place in Paris and Switzerland. |
| Do you have other interests? and/or member of other groups/societies? | I have lots of other interests, mainly painting (I belong to a watercolour class) and reading (I am an avid reader, usually between 40 and 60 books per year). I belong to a literature reading group (currently looking at american novels). I help a French self-help group, and as a Quaker and a member of WIFA (Watford Interfaith association) I am busy attending events weekly. I like travelling and support many animal charities (dogs and cats, elephants, donkeys, bears). |
| Do you have a website; Facebook, Twitter; Instagram? or write a blog? | I have an Instagram account but I am seriously fed up with unwanted contents and thinking of using it less. |
| What message would you like to give to other writers / would-be writers? | Goodness! I don't feel knowledgeable enough to dish out advice to anyone other than if you want to do it, go ahead and don't care about what people think. |
| Do you have favourite author or book? | Too many to mention but I will try in any order : Dostoevsky, Thomas Mann, Philip Kerr, Proust, Arthur Miller, Annie Ernaux, Colette, Victor Hugo, Michael Rosen, Patrick Modiano, Emile Zola, Edith Wharton, Jane Austen, Samuel Beckett, Saint-Exupery, Olga Tokarczuk, Seamus Heaney, Claire Keegan, Dickens, Mikhail Bulgakov, Aharon Appelfeld, Stefan Zweig, Benjamin Zephaniah, George Bernard Shaw, Graham Greene, Haruki Murakami, John Dickson Carr, Italo Calvino, Daphne du Maurier, Albert Camus, Agatha Christie. Also Sci-Fi (especially Philip K Dick, Philip Jose Farmer, Isaac Asimov, Arthur C Clarke, Ursula Le Guin,). I love a lot of Russian writers, I also read a lot of poetry, French, English and Spanish. I also read biographies, art books and history books. Also some political books and essays, some spiritual books, and thrillers. |