

Writing for Magazines

From my own experience

IAN WELLAND

Useful advice to me

“Write about what you know”

...Patrick Moore (Selsey, 1978)

***“For every one question answered,
there should be three more questions to ask!”***

...Christopher Lloyd (London, 2004)

Useful advice to me

The best part of writing is the research!

...Carl Sagan (London, 1980)

***“You can be early,
but there is no excuse for lateness!”***

...George Wheeler (London, 1978)

Workshop Content

- Areas of Interest - Specialisms
- Why write for magazines ?
- First stages – how to decide what to write and for which media
- Moving an idea forward – the “Angle”
- Hot and Cold – Getting a script together
- Submission. Publication and the aftermath
- Record keeping

Areas of Interest and Specialisms

- **Astronomy**

Amateur Astronomer (since 1974); Astronomical Historian (since 1979)

- **Art and Art History**

Art Historian (since 1980)

- **History**

Period 1900 – 1939 (since 1978)

My Experience (Summary)

- Submitted over 100 articles between 1981 – 2015
- Publication success average = 98%
- Worked with a number of Editors and Sub-Editors
- Have always delivered to deadline
- Have also provided my own photos to many articles
- Co-written 6 major features for 'Astronomy Now' including the 'Uranus' feature with Patrick Moore first published in 2006 and revised in 2010.

Why write for magazines?

- Audience / readership
- Share of knowledge
- Relevance
- Gets your work out there!

First Stages (How did I do it?)

- Research!!!
- Target publication(s)
- Read the publication(s)
- Look at the magazine's profile
- Understand the readership / target audience / circulation
- Where the publication is located? UK or elsewhere?

Exercise 1 (10 mins)

- Draw up a shortlist of magazines you like / have read
- Choose one magazine that you could consider submitting to
- Why have you selected that magazine?
- What is the style and profile of the magazine?
- What is your motivation for writing for / submitting to the magazine?

First Stages – Things to consider

- What, when, where, why and how (relevance / “angle”)
- Adding value
- Look at past editions
- Writing Guidelines
- Additional media
- Additional content

Moving an idea forward –the “Angle”

- Ideas for an article(s)
- Relevance / Topical / Unique ?
- A “one-off” or a “series” ?
- Is it an article, interview or review ?
- Is your idea in line with the magazine’s culture or style?
- Appeal ?

Moving an idea forward – the “Angle”

- Be aware of deadlines
- “Here and Now” ideas
- Compliance
- Submission
- Assumptions

Exercise 2 (10 mins)

- Having selected a magazine to write for (Exercise 1), plan out an idea for an article. Be sure to think about:
 - > Angle ?
 - > Audience – who is it aimed at ?
 - > Timescale – is it a “here and now” or an article in advance of an event, commemoration or anniversary ?
 - > Additional media – photos ?

Hot and cold – getting a script together

- Working Title, Synopsis and Plan
- Research – how much to use ?
- Draft script
- Final script
- Final Title and word count
- Format



HERSCHEL'S URANUS

Words: 1179

Note to Editor :

Submitted exclusively to:
ASTRONOMY NOW
August 2010

FBSR

Herschel's Uranus

On 13 March 1781, a composer-musician discovered the planet Uranus from his back garden in Bath and at a stroke, doubled the size of the known solar system. The feat was even more remarkable in that he was using a homemade 7 foot telescope with a 6.5 inch speculum mirror that when tested, was confirmed as a much better telescope than those being used for serious astronomical observation at Greenwich. For William Herschel (1738 – 1822), the discovery of Uranus changed his life and career. The story of his discovery however, starts on 10 May 1773 when Herschel purchased Ferguson's *Astronomy* book shortly after he had purchased a Hadley quadrant and Emerson's *Trigonometry*. Over the course of the next eight years, Herschel taught himself the constellations and started a project that simply would last the rest of his life: a 'review of the heavens'.

Almost from the start of Herschel's astronomical career, his sister Caroline became his secretary and it is purely down to her that the story of the discovery and indeed the full extent of Herschel's achievements can now be appreciated.

Herschel decided from reading Ferguson's book, that there appeared to be a need to investigate stars as fixed points; resolve their properties and find out more regarding the distribution of stars. Herschel was persuaded to resolve all stars and commence counting of stars in the field of view (referred to as star-gauging) and as larger powerful telescopes came into being, he would revisit and revise his observations to arrive at accurate catalogues of double stars, nebulous objects and forecasts of proper motion and distance.

Early observations raised even more questions as Herschel noted that the Milky Way converged and forked in different areas of the sky giving way to abundance of stars in clusters in one direction and then a more diffuse distribution in another. So the stage was set and discoveries awaited this very amateur but diligent astronomer. Such was Herschel's commitment that when concerting in Bath he was known to run through the streets to his telescope in order not to waste a single observing moment! By 1781, he was an incredibly skilled observer.

In March 1781 after several months of domestic inconvenience at 5 Rivers Street, Herschel decided to move back to New King Street and at Number 19 he found a sizable back garden suitable for astronomical observation. On 13 March his telescope was set up



ROSE HILTON
An Enchanting Grace

(1228 words)

By
Ian McClurg-Welland

Submitted to Art of England
(October 2007)

Note to Editor:
Submitted in advance of the exhibition:
Rose Hilton: A Fall of Light
A Selected Retrospective
at the
Tate St Ives, 26 January to 4 May 2008

FBSR

ROSE HILTON: An Enchanting Grace

Ian McClurg-Welland speaks exclusively to the renowned British artist on the eve of her selected retrospective at Tate St Ives.

"There is a beguiling tranquillity to many of Rose Hilton's paintings. Here is a civilised world where gentleness prevails, a radiant world of shimmering fields of high-keyed colour in which the traditional subjects of art – figure painting, landscape and still life – take on a new zest and relevance".

Andrew Lambirth, 2007.

The opening of Andrew Lambirth's essay, to be found in the catalogue accompanying the new selected retrospective exhibition of Rose Hilton at the Tate St Ives, is an impressive and truthful canter to a fine oeuvre that eclipses and stands high. Lambirth's evidence departs from the usual perceptive ways of an art critic and this is vital in our understanding of both work and inspirations of Rose Hilton. Rose, now in her 76th year, is as productive as ever and has no less enthusiasm and motivation than when she first started drawing. It's been a path that has shown no signs of defaulting. Even when Rose volunteered to put aside her art in preference to family life and supporting her artist husband, the late Roger Hilton (1911 – 1975), her inner belief burned brightly and sustained her trust in her vocation. As we welcome a unique opportunity to critique her work, Rose now provides some unique views of her own:

IMW: Did you always know you wanted to be an artist?

RH: *I always loved drawing and painting. I didn't know I wanted to be an artist; my parents were encouraging me to teach art, as I loved it so.*

IMW: There was a sense of rebellion as a child to your parents' devotion to religious order. Did you sense your character would be driven by perhaps a need to push beyond barriers?

RH: *No it wasn't rebellion to my parents' belief. It was more, when I managed by scholarship to get to the Royal College of Art (RCA), a transference - meaning my religious beliefs were transferred to the spiritual in painting.*

Submission, Publication & Aftermath

- Title Page
- Final Script
- First British Serial Rights (FBSR)
- Sending to the Editor
- Publication and Invoicing
- The Waiting Game

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CHECKLIST

- Are you sending your final completed article to the correct magazine and editor ?
- Have you spelt their name correctly ? !
- Have you attached your final version of your article (complete with front page) and attached any additional media (photos) ?
- Have you submitted by deadline date ?

Newspapers

- Freelance Journalism
- Press Releases
 - “What, When, Where, Why and How”
- Local Community News
- Articles – anniversaries, commemorations, events
- Reviews

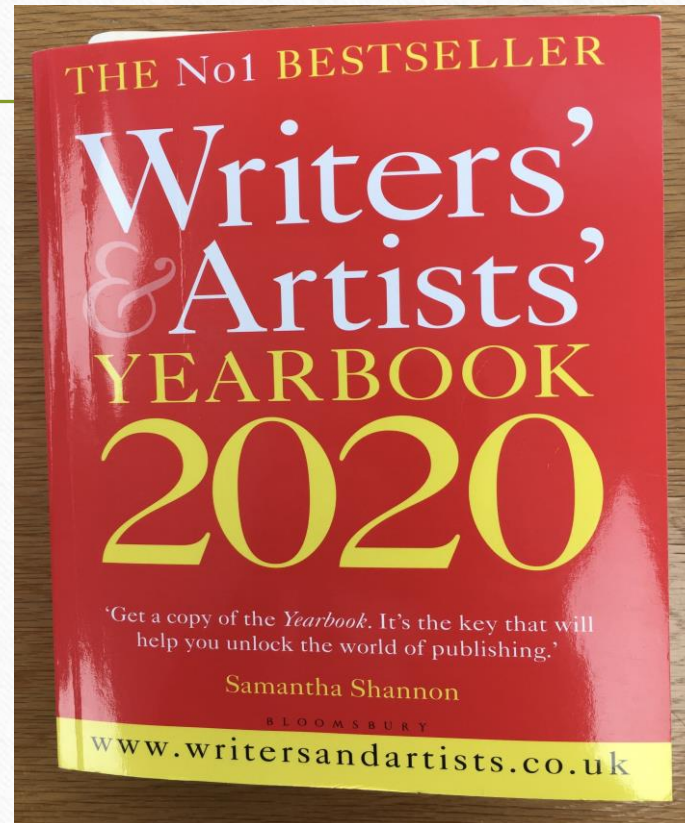
Journals

- Professional Associations and Societies
- Book Reviews
- News Items
- Articles – these are normally commissioned, but you could pitch to the Editor

Record Keeping

- Title
- Date of Submission and FBSR offered?
- Magazine submitted to
- Editor
- Publication Date
- Invoiced amount (if any) and payment received
- Comments – brief synopsis, reason for article, review date

...or you can read the first 98 pages of:



Your mission – should you care to accept it!

'FAMOUS INTERVIEWS'

- You are a journalist and have been assigned to interview someone famous, or not-so famous. You have to prepare your questions and tease out what you believe your readers would like to know! Is your chosen person receptive or resistant?
- Or; you may prefer to write an article on something you enjoy and could offer up to a magazine for the enjoyment of their readers
- **Maximum of 500 words to be presented to the group NEXT WEEK.**