



Autumn 2022 Newsletter.

Welcome.

Hello again from Kildare Writing Centre and happy October to you all. This time last year my debut novel, *Charlotte & Arthur* was published by Merdog Books, and it has been an exciting and busy twelve months since. Now that the festivals are ending for this year, I can turn my head again to the centre and the next writing course. I know it may disappoint some of you to hear, but there are no online courses scheduled. I understand the wonderful advantage of accessibility online affords but I am yearning to get you back into the classroom here at KWC, to be able to share the smell of the scented candle and log fire with you on a winter's night, to offer you a cuppa and a cake for the break, and to hear the scratch of your creativity as it fills the blank page.

With the first course beginning in November, details below, I am somewhat going back to basics. The first course I ran here was a ten-week course on the craft of writing a short story. The format of that course has stood me well and has been the foundation of every course I've given since; a mix of free-writing, instruction on craft, workshopping your stories and sharing thoughts on reading assignments. I am being influenced by feedback I have got from past students who have shared how valuable they found the format in helping them establish a routine around their writing process, and how the bond formed with other writers over the ten weeks often led to writing groups and networking beyond the course. Something very special happens when a group of writers sit around a table to think, to talk, to write together. I have missed that magical dynamic.

In this issue:

- Kildare Readers Festival
- Short Story course at Kildare Writing Centre

Kildare Readers Festival 2022

The Kildare Readers Festival, now in its 12th year kicks off this week. It is a lovely opportunity to get out and mix and mingle with like-minded people. I have been attending this festival since it began in 2010, I remember back then thinking that Listowel (Writer's Week being the only festival I was in any way familiar with at the time) had come to Kildare. The thrill of getting to see my favourite writers without having to look up travel arrangements or book accommodation! Over the years I have seen literary greats here such as Joseph O' Connor, Claire Keegan (My predicted 2022 Booker Prize winner...you heard it first here!), Liz Nugent, Donal Ryan, Jennifer Johnson, Eilís Ní Dhuibhne, Dermot Bolger, John MacKenna, and that is to name but a few. My favourite event in the festival is always the 'Ten Books You Should Read' event, and I can never decide if I am more thrilled when I have read the books picked by the writers, or more excited to read the ones I haven't. This year they have changed the format slightly and it is all about 'banned' books you should read. You gotta love 21st century Ireland!

<https://riverbank.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/873629912>

In 2019 I was honoured to facilitate a writing course as part of the festival and last year had the very great privilege of being awarded the 2021 Denis O' Driscoll literary bursary at the festival. I am participating again this year, firstly I have the lovely job of announcing the winners of the Annual Michael Mullan Charity Fund Writing Competition Prize-giving Event this Wednesday and on Saturday I have the wonderful honour of sharing the stage with this year's recipients of the Denis O'Driscoll awards; Niamh Boyce and Róisín Ní Neachtain.

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/kildarereadersfestival/752962>

<https://riverbank.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/873629915>

And of course, as always, the most amazing aspect of this festival, thanks to Kildare County Council Library and Arts Service...every event is free.

Get Booking!

<https://kildarecoco.ie/library/KildareReadersFestival/events/index.html>

Next Course at Kildare Writing Centre.

Writing the short story.

A ten week in-person course

Tuesday November 8th – Tuesday December 13th

Break for Christmas holidays

Tuesday January 10th – Tuesday January 31st.

6.30pm-9.30pm Cost: €350

Over the course of the ten weeks, I will take you through the craft of writing the short story, introduce you to the masters of the form, both classical and contemporary, and afford you the opportunity to write a story each week or work on one or more stories intensely over the ten weeks.

Course outline.

- Week 1.** Where to start/how to start! First impressions and Story Openings.
- Week 2.** Characterisation.
- Week 3.** Dialogue.
- Week 4.** Setting: Exploring ways of using Time and Place
- Week 5.** Point of view.
- Week 6.** Plot and Theme
- Week 7 & 8.** Language and description.
- Week 9 & 10.** Rewriting, Editing and Publication.

The format for each class is as follows:

1. Introductory chat followed by a prompted 10-minute written exercise.
2. An instructive session, based on a PowerPoint/handout on the art of writing where a different element of craft is explored each week.
3. A short discussion referencing the weekly reading assignment.
4. A fifteen-minute break with refreshments provided
5. Workshopping weekly written assignments from at least three students.
6. Concluding chat about the writing plans for the week ahead.

Ten participants(max) accepted on course. You can book your place here with a deposit of €150. The balance will be due on or before November 1st:

Booking: <https://kildarewritingcentre.com/short-story-online>