

## **WORKSHOPS**

### CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS

**Alain André**

#### 1. Context

Six times a year, [Aleph-Écriture](#) teachers suggest “open workshops” in different French bookshops (in Paris, Lyons, Evian, Bordeaux, Bergerac, La Rochelle, Niort, etc.), as well as in literary festivals and cultural centres.

In these specific workshops, people come in order to discover one recent book - and a writer; write from an original proposal, derived from the book; share about the book, the proposal and its stake, and about the short texts read by the participants.

After the workshop, they may rewrite, in order to send 1,500 signs or one standard sheet to the numerical collaborative magazine produced by Aleph-Écriture, [L'Inventaire](#). They may also choose one of their different texts and take part in a specific workshop that deals with rewriting and public reading. For the group of teachers, these workshops are also a great opportunity to share together about the most recent books they read and about tendencies in contemporary literature.

#### 2. Workshop

The workshop is conceived for creative writing teachers or students who are willing to discover a novelist through a book and a workshop. The book has been written by a European writer - it might be Jaume Cabré, William Boyd, Annie Ernaux, Mathias Enard or Erri de Luca, for instance - and published in 2015 or 2016.

The two first ninety-minutes long workshop deals with one book: reading of short extracts, proposal, writing, reading, feedback and sharing. The last one is devoted to the novels that the participants themselves would like to imagine a workshop about.

### 3. Aleph

Aleph-Écriture is a French creative writing school. Since 1985, Aleph has been offering writing courses to the general adult public, including classes to develop regular writing skills, manuscript assessment, individualized support and online instruction. It also serves organizations through consulting and training courses, event organisation and publishing activities.

In 1985, French literature teacher Alain André created the school with the help of other teachers. They built up a programme with a workshop approach, teachers' training and numerous cycles and courses. He published several essays about writing and creative writing teaching, as well as novels and short stories.

## THE DESIRING WRITING: IN THE SEARCH OF THE MIRACULOUS

**Lorena Briedis**

For the miracle of creation to happen we have to desire. If we agree that each creation is a miraculous event and we recognize ourselves as creators, then, automatically we are immediately placed in the search of the miracle of creation itself. Not only all artistic creation is miraculous-isolated event, but it is favored and crystallized by a series of frames and synchronicities of artistic character (a book, a movie, a concert) and experiential (a love, a journey, a death), which express themselves in our life as unusual findings, sudden encounters, lightings, epiphanies, that, in turn, have the potential to develop into creative energy and real inspiration. Also, all desire puts us in a position to search, so that miraculous search happens, as we shall see, in the practice of a desiring writing: the miracle of creation must be desired.

Based on some key pedagogical principles of the Finnish poet Risto Ahti, this workshop seeks to recognize and deepen into our desire as creators. How? From the unconscious: (number one) through images and symbols enrooted into our sensitivity that emerge in the dreaming act of writing and (number two) from the approach to our own imaginary in its tense vibration amongst past, present and future, that is: memory, emotion and desire. We will also explore our nature as creators in order to enhance our artistry and offset our fears. Ultimately, we will test a series of exercises more and less shamanic in order to contact and catalyze our own sources of creative energy and our working determination.

## INTERLINGUAL WORKSHOP OF WRITING

Magda Ruta

In strongly believe in the proximity of writing and acting – in terms of the word as an object (they use the same language) and in reciprocity of these arts – in a way they seem to need each other to exist and flourish. Theatre without literature is dumb, literature without theatre – misinterpreted.

During my workshop we are going to deal with the content, the very substance used to mould both literature and theatre. By “the content” I mean s t o r y telling; a story which makes claims to validity.

After mining these nuggets, we are going to cast them into something by subjecting them to a series of questions, which will enable us to feel the three-dimensionality of the situations we will be writing about. Then, we are going to analyse them by showing the multitude of possible interpretations of a given piece of text. Finally, we are going to rewrite these stories in different manners.

This workshop is also going to draw upon another kind of reciprocity, namely: mixing of cultures. As the participants will be asked to write in English, but with the noticeable influence, let’s call it “the accent” of their mother tongues their literary works would be even more interesting for our purposes, for it should allow us to look deeper into linguistic structures and the content conveyed non-linguistically.

## STORY REGIONS: STORYTELLING AS A TOOL FOR BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Ugo Sandulli

Homo sapiens appeared in Africa about 200,000 years ago. The erect stature, the manual dexterity, the use of fire and other everyday tools were, however, already features in common with other species of men who populated the land: the Sapiens didn’t appeared to have different elements to emerge.

Yet, 70,000 years ago something happened. It’s not yet clear what caused the change that would take them to be the most powerful species, but accidental changes in the genome created modifications of the brain. This revolution, named cognitive, provided the Sapiens of a very special tool: an extremely flexible language, capable to introject and to communicate large amounts of information about the environment and the internal ties of groups, as well as the skill to describe “imagined reality ” and to transcend the direct experience. Thus were born legends, myths, religions, and what we now call culture.

“Homo sapiens learned quickly to revise its behaviour and to conform to the changing needs, gaining distance from all other human and animal species, mainly in their ability to cooperate” (*From Animals into Gods: A Brief History of Humankind*, Yuval Noah Harari, Harper 2011). And this capacity is closely related to the appearance of fiction (“the fiction not only allowed us to imagine things, but to do so collectively”), creating stories and common myths, which allowed the coexistence of a number of individuals ever found in other species.

The workshop is inspired by the work of Harari and the pilot project Porta Palazzo (Erasmus+ - Story Regions), during which stories of the largest outdoor market in Turin and in Europe have been collected and told to raise awareness about the different cultures living there together and through them to create a more collaborative and cohesive community.

Each participant will be asked to identify a short story and to tell it, in order to create a common background and observe, as well, if and how this shared field manage to trigger a more constructive partnership or even to create a sense of community belonging.

## WORKSHOP: PITCHING TRAINING

**Stefano Tealdi**

A pitch is a concise verbal (and sometimes visual) presentation of an idea for a film or TV series generally made by a screenwriter to a film producer or studio executive in the hope of attracting development finance to pay for the writing of a screenplay. This practice has been developed in the cinema field but lately has been adapted in other narrative sector.

To pitch means to tell the main concept of a story in few minutes: it requires a precise idea of the plot, its core as well as its structure. It brings the author to focus around the important aspects of it, bringing them to light, facing also part that were hidden or not so clear at the beginning. For who is going to make the pitch it could become a way to re-discover her / his own story - a very interesting experience for the audience as well for the author itself.

During this workshop we will practice a pitching training where each participant will focus on a specific story that he\ she want to tell (or to write).