**Financial Times Weekend Oxford Literary Festival 2019**

Creative writing event I: 30 March 2019

**A Sense of Place**

**The course**

Whether you’re a beginner in creative writing or a more advanced writer looking for new ideas and inspiration, this one-day event may be exactly what you need. Designed by two professional writers with long experience of teaching creative writing at university level, the programme will address the writer’s art and craft in ways both practical and thought-provoking, involving both writing and the discussion of writing. The focus will be primarily on fiction, but writers of poetry and creative non-fiction are likely to gain useful insights from the event.

The course will highlight the importance of place in writing, addressing such matters as factual research, remembered and imagined spaces and the creation of atmosphere. This course can either be taken on its own or as in conjunction with the festival’s later creative writing course, ‘A Sense of Time’, held on 6 April.

The course has been devised with a group of 30 in mind; however, the presence of two tutors means that almost all of the teaching will take place in groups of 15. Each group will have two sessions with each tutor.

**The sessions**

9.30 - 11.00: Session 1. Introduction/ The importance of place

11.00 - 11.30: Coffee

11.30 - 1.00: Session 2. Finding a place

1.00 - 2.00: Lunch

2.00 - 3.30: Session 3: Creating a place

3.30 - 4.00: Tea

4.00 - 5.30: Session 4: Drawing it all together

Session 1. Introduction/ The importance of place

Whatever we’re writing, the location of our narrative is likely to be an important consideration. Using examples drawn from a range of different texts, we shall begin by discussing the ways in which writers’ awareness of place figures in their work.

Session 2. Finding a place

Through discussion and a practical exercise, we shall explore the ways in which both memory and research may help us to find locations appropriate to our creative needs.

Session 3: Imagining place

Through discussion and a practical exercise, we shall explore the processes by which the writer moves beyond remembered or discovered facts to create new locations in fictional worlds.

Session 4: Drawing it all together

The sense of place works in conjunction with other aspects of the writer’s art: character, plot and atmosphere are all likely to be linked to the locations represented in our narratives. In this final session we shall explore these links before going on to discuss ways of incorporating in our future writings the insights we’ve gained during the course.

**The tutors**

**Jem Poster** is Emeritus Professor of Creative Writing, Aberystwyth University, and Affiliated Lecturer in Creative Writing with Cambridge University’s Institute of Continuing Education; he is the author of a collection of poetry, *Brought to Light* (Bloodaxe, 2001) and two novels, *Courting Shadows* and *Rifling Paradise* (Sceptre, 2002 and 2006). **Sarah Burton**, founder and former Director of Cambridge University’s MSt in Creative Writing, is the author of *Impostors* (Penguin, 2000) and *A Double Life: A Biography of Charles and Mary Lamb* (Penguin 2003).