**Financial Times Weekend Oxford Literary Festival 2018**

Creative writing event I: 17 March 2018

**Where do you get your ideas?**

**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 has been devised with a group of 30 in mind; however, the presence of two tutors means that, apart from a half-hour period at the beginning of the course and another at the end, 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.Why do we write? / What are our sources?

11.00 - 11.30: Coffee

11.30 - 1.00: Session 2. Working with memory

1.00 - 2.00: Lunch

2.00 - 3.30: Session 3: Working with the imagination

3.30 - 4.00: Tea

4.00 - 5.30: Session 4: How can research help our writing? / Drawing it all together

Session 1. Why do we write? / What are our sources?

There are many reasons for writing. We shall discuss these before breaking into two separate groups to address possible ways into a piece of writing.

Session 2. Working with memory

However far we move from our own experience, memory is likely to play a very significant role in our writing. This session will explore that role through a combination of discussion and practical work.

Session 3: Working with the imagination

Building on the work carried out in the previous session, we shall go on to discuss and experience the operation of the creative imagination.

Session 4: How can research help our writing? / Drawing it all together

The writer’s research can take many forms. In this session we shall discuss some of these and explore the pleasures – and pitfalls – of working with researched material, before the two sub-groups are drawn together for a final discussion of the day’s work.

**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).