

John Siddique – A Selected Curriculum Vitae

May 2007 'Between the Words' Austrian Tour

A series of readings, school and adult workshops across Austria, following on from the success of appearing at 2006's Vienna Lit.

March 2007- Arvon Foundation (Lumb Bank) – Tutor

Working alongside non-fiction writer Marina Benjamin, working with young writers, to help them produce new work, and study core elements of poetry and narrative writing, in order to strengthen their own practice.

Feb 2007 – Poems from A Northern Soul - Author

Publication of a poetry collection by Crocus, bringing together some of my commissioned writings from The Lowry, The Rainer Charity, and The BBC/Commonword residencies.

Dec 2006 – Fundacion Valparaiso Residency – Author

A month spent working on new poetry and a novel supported by Fundacion Valparaiso and Arts Council of England.

Nov 2006 – Don't wear it on your head, (Poems for young people) - Author

Publication of my collection of poetry by for children aged 8 to 12. Published by Peepal Tree.

Nov 2006 & Feb 2007 – Kicking Leaves Children's' Literature Festival – Poet

A series of readings & workshops for KS2 children in primary schools throughout the festival organised by Mid-Pennine Arts.

Nov 2006- Arvon Foundation (Totleigh Barton) – Tutor

Working alongside non-fiction writer Marina Benjamin, looking how to use experience from real lives to produce, poetry, prose, memoir and non-fiction, we also looked at how to avoid cliché, and how to make personal writing have universal elements. We concentrated on the importance of reading, and how that affects one as a writer.

Oct 2006 – Vienna Lit - Poet

A week of poetry readings and workshops in Vienna supported by The British Council and Arts Council of England. One of my poems was also used in schools throughout Austria as the basis for a national poetry competition for teenagers, responding to my poem young people created pieces of their own, some of which were performed during the festival.

September 2006 – 'Horae' - Commission – Poet

A commission to write a series of poems for the city of York for national poetry day, based on the themes of prayer, identity and time passing. Working with young people and the public, images were gathered to trigger my writing. The final poems will appear on York Minster's Website in 2007, made into a series of postcards and permanently displayed in York libraries.

May – Nov 2006 – 'From One Reader to Another,' National Tour with Faber & Faber – Poet

A large scale national tour of readings working with Faber, The Reading Agency and UK Libraries; introducing readers who may be poetry wary to a broad selection of contemporary and classic poetry with the hope of getting them to add a little to their reading.

May 2006 - Four Fathers Book and 2nd Tour – Co Author and Writer

Collection of short stories published by ROUTE, featuring James Nash, Tom Palmer, Ray French and myself writing stories about fathering and fatherhood. This book is couple with a large UK tour running until March 2007.

Mar 2006

Tour of Prisons in South Wales – Poet

A tour of Readings and Workshops in Prisons across South Wales, working with all types of prisoners including, young offenders, adults and sex offenders.

Mar 2006

Young offenders project with Opera North – Lead Artist

A project designed to raise self-esteem of a small group of young offenders who are interested in art. Using poetry and text as a starting point we developed initial ideas into songs and recorded spoken word. We also created photographic records of the workshops, collages reflecting their aspirations and put together individual books with each participant.

Feb 2006

Schools Tour in Todmorden West Yorkshire - Visiting 8 schools, working with KS2 Children - Poet

Poetry Readings and Workshops, readings involving the whole school, workshops aimed at Yr 4 & 5, working with national curriculum subjects and learning outcomes, project work on Egypt, World War II, and generally introducing playful poetry and literacy ideas to both pupils and staff.

Various dates 2005 - Poet

OFF Centre tour: a series of readings around the country, with the theme of looking at ordinary life and love from other perspectives.

September 2005 – The Prize - Author

Publication of my first full poetry collection from The Rialto.

April – November 2005 - Author

Four Fathers Tour: Promotional book tour for the short story collection 'Four Fathers,' combining readings from the four authors, with audience discussion. Four Fathers is different in that it is a free book, downloadable from the publisher's website www.route-online.com. The stories are loving portraits of each of the writer's fathers.

July 2005 - Arvon Foundation (Totleigh Barton) – Tutor

Working alongside novelist Nick Barlay, looking at prose and poetry and the business of writing, We focused the sessions, both in groups and one to one, to develop the writer's voice by examining the choices one makes in reading, we also ran sessions on creating creativity, forms and narratives, image, structure and landscape.

May 2005 - Rainer - Poet

I was commissioned by the Rainer Charity to work alongside them in their work with under-supported young people, to create a series of portraits in poetry of the young people and the ongoing processes in their lives. The poems were turned into paintings to form an exhibition and will be published in my new book in Feb 2007.

May 2005 – Spread the Word 'Kernel Workshops' – Tutor

Spread the Word is a key literature development agency in London; I ran 3 days of workshops, over consecutive weekends, to help writers develop ideas from a kernel to writings and performances. The course culminated with a live performance by the entire group on the evening of the final session.

Feb - May 2005 - COMMONWORD & BBC Manchester - Poet in Residence

I ran an advanced poetry course and mentoring scheme for twelve poets. I facilitated general workshops, and created two online discussion forums, one for writers, and one for the public to send ideas, which I would turn into poetry, I also documented the run up to the general election in verse for the BBC. I referred the public to classic and new poetry, encouraged debates on reading and often appeared on air discussing the themes that arose. I spent time working on my second collection, editing an anthology of poetry, and participated in and organized live literature events.

Feb 2005 - Arvon Foundation (Lumb Bank) – Tutor

Working along side actor Saul Jaffe, we ran a weeklong course for students with learning difficulties from Castle Hill School, Sunderland. The week focused on poetry and drama, taking our students through ways of creating poetry and narrative, bringing their pieces to life by learning performance skills and sharing their work.

Sept – Oct 2004 Ilkley Literature Festival - Poet in Residence

Twenty days of primary school workshops covering a huge spectrum of poetry styles, including looking at work from other cultures. I performed my own work at various public readings, and I was the judge for the young people's poetry competition as well host at many events at this major festival.

Feb – May 2004 Bradford Youth Offending Team - Writer and facilitator

Working with Bradford Youth Offending Team who referred young people to me who were excluded from school, or on licensed release from Young Offenders Institutions. I encouraged and enabled the young people through creative literature means to develop texts and artworks which explored their issues of identity, family, relationships, and experience of society.

May - Sept 2004 Connect - Writer and facilitator

I ran a series of workshops at Oldham Hospital on the Psychiatric Unit, encouraging patients and staff to look at the senses as a basis for connection to creativity, emotion and physicality. Along with running the sessions I also mentored two of the medical staff in order to aid them to use creative practices more within the work they do on the wards.

August 2003 – May 2004 'A Word in Edgeways' Touring Company - Poet & Performer & Co-writer

Writing and performing with 'A Word in Edgeways' Theatre Company. A devised show called 'and SHE WAS,' based on the traditional Indian folktale, 'A flowering tree.' The company comprised of 3 storytellers, a musician, and myself. 'And SHE WAS,' was an innovative piece bringing together, storytelling, poetry, song, music, digital soundscapes, and digital animation, in a sensual show for audiences over 16 years old. My role was one of poet and performer, and I also created the electronic soundscapes, to work alongside harp and cello, underpinning and scoring much of the action.

Oct 2000 – Oct 2003 HMYOI Wetherby - Writer in Residence

For this 3-year period I was Writer in Residence at Wetherby prison near York. The scheme was funded by the Prison Service, Arts Council of England, and administered by the Writers in Prisons Network. I worked with both prisoners and staff, and ran a whole manner of groups and one to one sessions. I worked with people who wanted to write their stories, or develop their language ability, or even sometimes people who wanted to learn to read or extend their reading skills.

I tried to encourage people to understand their own language process, via reading and writing, and to use creative language to connect them with their own lives. This was most prevalent in the 'Men Behaving Dadly' sessions where I encouraged young fathers to write & record children's stories onto tape, which were then sent out to their kids, who listen to their father's voices reading them bedtime stories. I worked in some of the most difficult areas of the prison with young men on the 'healthcare unit,' very often with lads who had self harmed

or been victims of bullying. I also worked in the 'segregation unit,' where prisoners are moved for bad behaviour, or sometimes for their own protection. One of my favourite areas of work was running a staff creative reading and writing group, we had a mix of staff from all areas of the prison community actually engaging with each other about something other than work.

The prison won 2 Koestler awards for the Prison Magazine 'The Key,' and also for an oral storytelling programme which I set up.

May & June 2003 Eureka! The Museum For Children - Poet

Running lots of workshops combining the science of the body & poetry for young people between the ages of 6 to 12 years old.

2001 – 2004 Flip the Script – Host

Hosting Manchester's Contact Theatre's 'Flip the Script'. This is part of the BBC's new writing initiative. Writers submit short plays, which are directed and performed script in hand, before a very lively audience who vote on the work. I interviewed the audiences finding out their thoughts on the works; I also interviewed the writers about their work and introduced the plays.

July 1999 – 2003 Ledbury Poetry Festival - Writer in residence for young people

Working with groups of young people enabling and encouraging them to create their own bodies of work. We staged a number of successful performances at the Ledbury festival itself and created an exhibition of digital art and poetry. A group poem by 20 of my young poets was published in Fire magazine, and numerous other poems by my young writers have appeared in anthologies, newspapers, & magazines.

April 1999 – April 2003 START - Creative Writing Tutor

A weekly daylong writing workshop for people with moderate to serious mental health issues.

April & May 2002 Prestwich Hospital - Poet in residence

A 6 week residency working with children with profound mental health difficulties, ranging from incest and abuse survivors to children with eating disorders. This residency took place on a specialist school unit at the hospital. Working with the school's art teacher to create texts and images around identity and notions of belonging. Each participant was involved in creating individual and group works, which were exhibited at Bury Art Gallery for the Commonwealth Games.

April 2000 - April 2001 The Lowry - Poet in Residence

I was invited to be the Lowry's first Writer in Residence. I created a body of writings that spoke of the paintings and told their inner and outer stories. To help the process along I found myself asking everyone's opinion about the paintings, the building, the locations, everything, and used these real responses in the poems. Alongside the Lowry's I also worked with the art of Alice Maher, Thomas Ruff, & Depero. I ran workshops for adults and for children, conducted monthly poetry tours of the galleries.

June 2001 Home from Home - Poet

13 poems as a soundtrack to a short film by Bradford Heritage Recording Unit exploring the Mirpuri experience both on the sub-continent and in the UK.

Dec 2000 - Feb 2001 Meadowbrook Psychiatric Unit (Year Of The Artist) - Poet in Residence

My brief was to work with patients, doctors, staff, relatives, visitors, in fact anyone around The Meadowbrook Psychiatric Unit in Salford. I began this project by asking the people who used Meadowbrook what they would like to see me write. I was told in no uncertain terms that they wanted a collection of works that showed that mental illness is just that an illness; and that they are ordinary people just like anyone else... That this type of illness can affect anyone, I created about sixty pieces of writing during this time, I also ran workshops and helped patients create their own pieces of work. This residency was funded by Year of the Artist.

April 1999 - Sept 2000 Bury Council - Literature Development Officer

Encouraging reading and literature activities in the Bury MBC area, including: developing a public archive, working with Bury Art Galleries and Irwell sculpture trail, organising tours of poets, English lit homework clubs, working with local magazines, writers groups and local pubs and clubs to develop a literary infrastructure within the region.

April 1999 - April 2000 Poetry Society/BT - Lead poet on Futuretalk Scheme

Leading a team of five poets taking poetry into over 400 schools in all parts of the British Isles. Running creative writing sessions and readings, I looked after much of the interfacing of the scheme with BT and was also responsible for the pastoral care of the other poets, much of the work was featured by BT in the Millennium Dome.

Nov 1997 – April 1998 Milton Keynes Council - Writer in Residence

Running creative writing workshops in schools and consultancy work advising on the English program for primary schools. In addition to these two major strands of the job working with the local 'Living Archive' local history project, and with local oral storytellers, creating cross-platform story & poetry shows.

Jan 1995 - April 1997 Cheshire County Council - Literature Development Officer

Creating a stimulating and open series of networks and training for writers and readers. Part of my job was to set up tours of major writers around venues in Cheshire, provide training for librarians and stock managers, and to set up an 'Artists in Schools' scheme. I also played an advisory role to Arts Council of England on the development of literature activity on a national basis. I also worked voluntarily as Writer in Residence at Styal women's prison over this period.