

Study Abroad Summer Program 2016: Creative Writing in England [01: 959: 417: Section: 02]

Dates: Tues, May 17th to Thurs, June 2nd, 2015

Arrive: Most economical to fly into Heathrow morning of May 17th (I'll be there for transfer to Lewes)

Location: Lewes, East Sussex, England

Accommodation: Shared rooms at the White Hart Hotel, Lewes (www.whitehartlewes.co.uk)

Group leaders: Paul Blaney, Writer in Residence, SAS Honors Program (blaney.paul@gmail.com) & Catherine Charlton, Study Abroad Director, UK & Ireland (Catherine.b.charlton@gmail.com)

About the Course: This two-week, writing-intensive program will be based near Brighton on the south coast of England. The program will combine writing with reading, walking, and visits to local places of interest, including the home of Virginia Woolf. You will be challenged to write in different genres, taking inspiration from the work of celebrated English authors as well as from the places and people that inspired those authors. These 'inspirations' will take the form of a series of poems and/or prose works plus an essay on an aspect of English life. Revised inspirations will be combined in your final portfolio, due in your Dropbox by the end of June.

N.B. This is an intensive program, with only one free day in the course of the two weeks. If you wish to travel more widely, you should arrange to arrive in advance of the program or to stay after it ends. The city of Brighton is 15 minutes from Lewes by public bus or train. From Brighton there are frequent trains to London as well as to London's Gatwick airport for international flights.

Requirements & Grade Distribution

Participation and attendance: 25%

You will be expected to appear in a timely manner for all excursions, group activities, and meetings. In between planned events you will dedicate a substantial amount of time to your writing assignments (blogs, prose, poetry, essay, post-program response).

Final Portfolio: 75%

Your final portfolio will consist of: i) prose pieces and/or poems; and ii) an essay. Your creative work will be expected to reflect your reading (and viewing) as well as your personal interactions with the English people, culture and landscape.

Your essay should examine one aspect of English life as seen from an American perspective. You might choose to write about the English landscape, English newspapers or television, a local tradition, customs and manners, or whatever else strikes you about life in England.

In assessing your Final Portfolio, I'll be looking both at the intrinsic merit of your writing and the extent to which the work submitted shows evidence of improvement on earlier drafts, effectively incorporating critical input.

Course Policy: The intensive nature of this program requires adherence to strict deadlines. Therefore any work submitted late (after June 30th) will not be accepted. Any form of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course and will be reported to your academic Dean.

To Read (pre-departure or while in England):

Walking Essays (see Resources section on Sakai)

To the River by Olivia Laing (lots of local detail and history)

Virginia Woolf: A Biography by Quentin Bell (this will make our visit to Monk's House more meaningful)

Moments of Being by Virginia Woolf (personal essays)

George Orwell's essay on Rudyard Kipling plus Kipling's poem 'Sussex' (both on Sakai)

Viewing and Listening

Since this is a short, intensive program, you ought to be thinking in advance about England, the English countryside and culture, and the question of Englishness. The following are suggested as useful pre-program texts:

Books: *Between the Acts* by Virginia Woolf; *A Handful of Dust* by Evelyn Waugh; *Brighton Rock* by Graham Greene; *Last Orders* by Graham Swift; *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro; *England, England* by Julian Barnes

Locally based (Brighton) movies: *Brighton Rock* (1947), *Quadrophenia* (1973), *Wish You Were Here* (1987), *Dirty Weekend* (1993), *Brighton Rock* (2010)

Some key English movies: *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946); *Passport to Pimlico* (1949); *Room at the Top* (1959); *Carry on Screaming* (1966); *Jubilee* (1977); *Abigail's Party* (1977); *Gregory's Girl* (1981); *Cal* (1984); *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985) *Withnail and I* (1986); *Orlando* (1992); *The Crying Game* (1992); *The Remains of the Day* (1993); *Secrets and Lies* (1996); *Ratcatcher* (1999); *Gosford Park* (2001); *Morvern Callar* (2002); *Happy-Go-Lucky* (2007); *The Fish Tank* (2009); *The King's Speech* (2010); *The Angel's Share* (2012).

***Pre-departure assignment 1*:** Watch one of the movies listed here and post a response to the Discussion section on Sakai. Give a short summary of the film and your response to it. What did you notice? Did anything surprise you? Confuse you? Were you able to follow the dialogue? What sort of picture of England/Britain did the movie present?

TV Series: *Fawlty Towers*; *The Office* (not the American version); *Shameless* (not the American version); *Prime Suspect*; *Little Britain*; *The Vivienne Vyle Show*; *Downtown Abbey*

Music (Bands to check out): The Jam; Squeeze; PJ Harvey; Adele; Radiohead; The Specials; The Streets; Oasis; Blur/Gorillaz; The Cure; The Happy Mondays; The Stone Roses; The Verve; The Sex Pistols; The Clash; Nick Drake; The Cocteau Twins; Kate Bush

Newspapers: The Guardian (www.guardian.co.uk); The Daily Telegraph (www.telegraph.co.uk); The Daily Mail (www.dailymail.co.uk); The Sun (www.thesun.co.uk). The United Kingdom has legislative elections on May 7th. **I'd like you all to get a sense of the parties and issues either from the BBC website or by accessing the above newspaper sites.**

***Pre-departure assignment 2*:** Post to the discussion section on Sakai a poem in which every line begins 'In England . . .'. (Anaphora). Feel free to be playful. This exercise is designed to elicit some of our preconceptions about England, the expectations of the first-time visitor. A visitor who has read about England and seen it represented in movies and on TV, but never actually set foot on English soil.

Schedule (subject to alteration)

[The program is loosely based on Virginia Woolf's daily schedule. Most mornings will be dedicated to writing. After lunch we'll walk or visit local literary sites.]

Tues, 5/17: Arrival: Meet in Airport Lounge; Check-in at White Hart from 2p.m. Orientation in Lounge at 4pm; Tour of Lewes.

Wed, 5/18: Writing in the morning followed by a gentle local walk (Foxy View) at 2pm. Group Dinner at La Famiglia.

Thurs, 5/19: Writing in the morning followed by a walk on the South Downs.

Friday, 5/20: Afternoon visit to **Charleston Farm** (Vanessa Bell et al.). Reading at **Charleston Literary Festival**.

Sat, 5/21: Afternoon trip to Brighton (pavilion, museum, arts festival)

Sun, 5/22: Rest and write.

Mon, 5/23: Writing in the morning, afternoon walk

Tues, 5/24: Walk to and tour of **Monk House** (home of Virginia Woolf) and garden

Wed, 5/25: Writing in the morning, afternoon visit to **Bateman's**, home of Rudyard Kipling

Thurs, 5/26: Writing in the morning, afternoon walk. An evening with poet **Ann Segrave**

Fri, 5/27: **London** (Globe Theatre tour/workshop/play)

Sat, 5/28: Rest and write. Submissions deadline for conferences

Sun, 5/29: Clifftop/seaside walk via Seven Sisters/Beachy Head

Monday, 5/30: Writing in the morning, afternoon walk. Conferences.

Tues, 5/31: Full-day walk (18 miles)

Wed, 6/1: Final **Group Reading** at the Lewes Arms

Thurs, 6/2: Departure from White Hart