

## University of Roehampton International Summer School

**Department of English and Creative Writing**

**Module Title: Hidden London**

**Module Code: CRW020N299H**

**Module Tutor: Dr Neal Calhoon**

### **Module Rationale:**

London is an extraordinary city, in which history, culture, and desire collide. It is a city of stories as no other, and has inspired brilliant writing for hundreds of years. This module aims to enable students to situate their writing about London in relation to key texts that have shaped the way we think about and experience London. Each session addresses a specific topic, with one key text at the focus of analysis, discussion and creative assignments and outings.

Students who successfully complete this module will have:

- developed advanced proficiencies in reading and writing skills
- shown a willingness to engage with complex texts and attained the ability to grasp the critical and theoretical frameworks within which they are situated
- understood how more complex literary forms have developed historically and appreciated their relevance to cultural life
- explored the potentiality of these forms in their own creative writing
- develop links between creative and critical texts and their own practice
- Explore the relationship between the physical and historical city of London, and its literary construction.

### **Syllabus**

The module will allow students to engage with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction exploring the literary representation of London. Material will be approached thematically, with classic and contemporary texts paired to engage with the changing perceptions and representations of the city. Several related outings will enable students to compare the written and fictional accounts of London with their own experience of the city, and set up a productive dialogue between the two

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

The module relies upon a combination of tutor-led seminars, student-led group work, and individual tutorials. Tutor-led seminars are to introduce key texts and issues and to offer opportunities for informally structured discussion, student-led group work offers opportunities for peer evaluation and discussion of work, and individual tutorials allow students to discuss ideas for written work and to receive feedback on their progress. The module will also feature guided walking tours through specific areas of London which are featured in the course material, to allow students to engage more multi-modally with course content and the achievement of the module learning goals.

**Assessment**

A portfolio of exercises and written work comprising not more than 2,000 words of writing (70%) and

EITHER:

A ten minute presentation of the relationship between their work and its creative and critical contexts, OR

1,500 word critical self-analysis of the written work (30%)

**Hidden London: An Annotated Reading List.****Primary Texts**

Ali, Monica (2004) Brick Lane London: Black Swan

With its gritty Tower Hamlets setting, this sharply observed contemporary novel about the life of an Asian immigrant girl deals cogently with issues of love, cultural difference and the human spirit.

Defoe, Daniel (1722, 1970) A Journal of the Plague Year London: Penguin

The novel is a fictionalised account of one man's experiences of the year 1665, in which the Great Plague struck the city of London.

Doyle, Arthur Conan, A Study in Scarlet (1887, 2001) London: Penguin

The first novel by Arthur Conan Doyle to feature his infamous detective Sherlock Holmes. Follow Holmes and his sidekick Watson over the river to South London to solve the gruesome murder of an American in Brixton..

Lichtenstein, Rachel (2008) On Brick Lane London: Penguin

Brick Lane today is a place of extremes – a street that's constantly reinventing itself. Blending history and reportage with personal testimony and urban myths, and interspersing these with maps and photography, *On Brick Lane* is a one-of-a-kind chronicle of one of London's most remarkable streets.

Mieville, China (2008) Un Lun Dun London: Pan

Zanna and Deebea are two girls leading ordinary lives, until they stumble into the world of UnLondon, an urban Wonderland where all the lost and broken things of London end up . . . and some of its lost and broken people too. Here discarded umbrellas stalk with spidery menace, carnivorous giraffes roam the streets, and a jungle sprawls beyond the door of an ordinary house.

Moore, Alan, with Campbell, Eddie (2008) From Hell London: Knockabout

A recreation of the reign of Jack the Ripper in graphic novel form, and a profound meditation on London as a Mythic city

In the Roehampton Library at 741.5/MOO

Phillips, Caryl (1998) Extravagant Strangers: A Literature of Belonging London: Faber

A revelatory and compelling anthology of pieces by British writers who were born beyond Britain's shores, which redefines our notion of 'English' literature. 'An inspired collection of 'outsider' views of Britain, and especially, London.

We will make repeated reference to the pieces in this anthology.

Reeve, Philip Mortal Engines (2002) London: Scholastic

The first in a steampunk trilogy re-imagines London as a predatory mobile city that swallows its neighbours

Ryman, Geoff (2010) 253 London: Flamingo

252 passengers and one driver on the London Underground. They all have their own personal histories, their own thoughts about themselves and their travelling neighbours. And they all have one page devoted to them. It's a seven-and-a-half minute journey between Embankment and the Elephant & Castle. It's the journey of 253 lifetimes! This is the full text of the celebrated interactive novel that startled the Web when it first went on line.

Sinclair, Iain, with Lichtenstein, Rachel (2000) Rodinsky's Room London: Granta

Rodinsky's world was that of the East European Jewry, cabalistic speculation, an obsession with language as code and terrible loss. He touched the imagination of artist Rachel Lichtenstein, whose grandparents had left Poland in the thirties. This text weaves together Lichtenstein's quest for Rodinsky -which took her to Poland, to Israel and around Jewish London -with Iain Sinclair's meditations on her journey into her own past, and on the Whitechapel he has reinvented.

Smith, Zadie: (2000) White Teeth London: Penguin

Meet the Joneses, the Iqbals and the Chalfens. Three families all English to varying degrees and involved in each other's lives in every conceivable way - personally, politically, historically, genetically. Different colours, different religions and different sides of the unforgotten colonial fence, they have one thing in common: a small borough of North London where extremism of all kinds is the order of the day and the dilemmas of previous generations are obsessively played out in the present.

Waters, S. (2006) The Night Watch. London: Virago

Moving back through the 1940s, through air raids, blacked out streets, illicit liaisons, sexual adventure, to end with its beginning in 1941, The Night Watch is the work of a truly brilliant and compelling storyteller. This is the story of four Londoners - three women and a young man with a past, drawn with absolute truth and intimacy.

Woolf, Virginia (1925,2000) Mrs Dalloway London: Penguin

On a June morning in 1923, Clarissa Dalloway is preparing for a party and remembering her past. Elsewhere in London, Septimus Smith is suffering from shell-shock and on the brink of madness. Their days interweave and their lives converge as the party reaches its glittering climax. Here, Virginia Woolf perfected the interior monologue and the novel's lyricism and accessibility have made it one of her most popular works.

### *Secondary Texts*

Ackroyd, P. (2000) London The Biography, London: Vintage

Copies in the Roehampton Library at 942.1/ACK

Dyos, H.J. and M. Wolff (1973) The Victorian City: Images and Realities, 2 vols, London: Routledge

Feldman, D. and G. Stedman Jones, eds (1989) Metropolis, London: Histories and Representations since 1800, London: Routledge

Glinert, E. (2000) A Literary Guide to London, London: Penguin

Inwood, S. (2000) A History of London, London: Macmillan

Orwell, George, (1933, 1999) Down and Out in Paris and London

Parsons, D. (2000) Streetwalking the Metropolis, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Porter, R. (1996) London: A Social History, London: Penguin

- Sandhu, Sukhdev (2003) London Calling: How Black and Asian Writers Imagined a City London: HarperCollins
- Schneer, Jonathan, (2001) London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis, New Haven: Yale University Press
- Thesing, W.B. (1982) The London Muse: Victorian Responses to the City, Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press
- Walkowitz, J. (1992) City of Dreadful Delight, London: Virago
- Weightman, G. and S. Humphries (1984) The Making of Modern London, 1914-1939, London: Sidgwick & Jackson
- Welsh, A., (1971) City of Dickens, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Williams, R. (1973) The Country and the City, London: Chatto & Windus