

SW SHORT STORY COMPETITION 2018

Brief:

'Lighten Up'. Write a humorous story.

Word Count:

1600-1800 words.

Judge:

Magician, Actor and Director, Julian Hirst.

Julian has enjoyed a career as a professional magician appearing in theatres, conferences, trade shows and private parties all over the world.

His professional acting debut was at The Wilde Theatre, South Hill Park in the late 80s and has returned many times since. Julian has also directed and played the Dame in a number of South Hill Park's successful pantomimes such as *Jack & the Beanstalk*, *Snow White* and he was Abanazer in *Aladdin*. Other favourite theatre performances include, Mr Toad in *The Adventures of Toad*, Fagin in *Olivier*, Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*, Darren Van Horner in *The Witches of Eastwick* and most recently as the Duke of Wellington in the stage version of *Blackadder*.

Julian's directing credits include *Lettice & Lovage*, *By Jeeves*, *Steel Magnolias*, *The Rise & Fall of Little Voice* and is currently directing *Spamalot*, which is to be performed in May at The Wilde Theatre.

Television Credits include *The Bill*, *Frankenstein's Baby*, *Mother Love* and *Rough Justice*.

Judge's Notes

I love humorous prose. If I were to be cast away on a desert island with 8 gramophone records, the question I'd struggle with most would be my book choice. It would definitely be funny. Preferably "laugh out loud causing you to snort the hot tea you happen to be drinking at the time out of both nostrils" funny. This happened to me when reading Bill Bryson's "Notes From a Small Island" on a flight from Edinburgh to Heathrow. The person sitting next to me thought I was having some kind of seizure or fit and summoned the cabin crew.

Something like 'Puckoon' by Spike Milligan perhaps? I admire Milligan's word play and ability to create situations that subtly skip one step of logic. I also used to be very fond of Alan Coren, who the Guardian described as "an exasperated, irascible commentator on contemporary folly". Huge fan too of both David Sedaris and Alan Bennett. I love that as you read the words you hear the author reading out loud to you alone. But then I suppose it helps that we frequently hear them on the wireless doing just that.

But the book that would have me braving the raging foam to drag back to shore would more than likely be penned by PG Wodehouse. I've lost count of the number of times I've read "Gussie Presents the Prizes" from "Right Ho, Jeeves." His technique of "making the thing a sort of musical comedy without music, and ignoring real life altogether" not only appeals to me but in my opinion is one that should be adopted all contributors to Facebook!

Deadline:

February 19th 2018 (Email submission only. Send to Terry)

Results:

March 26th 2018

Rules:

Open to members only.

One entry per member.

Write on only one side of A4 paper.

Manuscripts must be typed in a clear legible font and be **1.5 spaced**.

Title of the story and page number to appear on each page.

No author's name to appear anywhere on the manuscript or in the file name.

Submission Rules:

Email your article as a word .doc attachment to Terry (e-mail address available on request)

Your file should have the same name as the title of your manuscript prefixed by SWSS18.

(e.g. 'SWSS18 – 'Whoops!').

Once all the entries are in, they will be sent electronically to Julian. You will receive an email from Terry confirming when your entry has been received by Julian.

For this competition, work may be discussed amongst members, but is entirely up to the individual and done on a mutual basis between writer and reader. Members should not discuss any other entries without the permission of the author to respect the privacy of those who wish to keep their work to themselves.

Failure to comply with any of the rules may result in your work being withdrawn from the competition.

Good Luck!