Newcastle Children’s Literature Unit: 2015 Events

Newcastle’s Children’s Literature Unit is pleased to present a new series of events in collaboration with Seven Stories and the Robinson Library. Open to anyone who is interested in children’s literature, these events explore all aspects of children’s literature. How are children’s books made? What role do they play in our lives? What can they tell us about ourselves?

All events are free and open to the public. Event locations are around the Newcastle University campus: see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/about/visit/maps.htm for directions.

Brian Alderson: All About Ladybirds
5.30pm, Wednesday 4 February, 2015, Seminar Room 152, Robinson Library
Find out all about Ladybird books as we celebrate the centenary of this famous popular imprint. This talk coincides with the publication of The Ladybird Story by Brian Alderson and Lorraine Johnson, which traces the history of the Ladybird venture from its wobbly beginning through Wills & Hepworth's triumphant management of the series up to its sale in 1972, and its fortunes in the years following.

Laura Tosi and Peter Hunt: Alice, Pinocchio, Fantasy and International Stereotypes
5.30pm, Wednesday 11 February, 2015, Lecture Room G.05, Percy Building
Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Collodi’s Pinocchio are two of the most famous, most translated books in the world: they are national and transnational classics. Despite the fact that Pinocchio is widely regarded as stereotypically Italian, and Alice as stereotypically English, they have transcended their national origins. Professor Laura Tosi (Università Ca’ Foscari, Venice) and Professor Peter Hunt (Visiting Professor, Newcastle University) discuss the ways in which the national stereotypes and national characteristics (inherent or perceived) in these books are absorbed into or conflict with international concepts of fantasy.
2015 Fickling Lecture: Ian MacMillan
'My life and easy times - getting away with words'
5:30, 17 February, 2015 Curtis Auditorium

The 2015 Fickling Lecture, to be given by Ian McMillan on 17 February at the University of Newcastle, will explore how children's books such as the Biggles series of W.E. Johns set him on course to becoming an influential and much-loved poet, broadcaster, commentator and programme maker. A focus of his lecture will be on making performance poems with excluded teenagers in a Pupil Referral Unit as a way of showing how working with words helps children and young people negotiate - and renegotiate - the world.

Fickling Lectures are co-hosted by Newcastle University and Seven Stories, National Centre for Children’s Books with sponsorship from David Fickling Books. They are free and open to all, though not recommended for children and young people under the age of 15.

Brian Alderson: Maurice Sendak: Beyond the Wild Things
5.30pm, Wednesday 11 March, 2015, Seminar Room 152, Robinson Library

Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are (1968) is one of the great classics of the picture book world, but Max’s adventures are only a small part of Sendak’s rich and varied work. Brian Alderson looks at Sendak’s work as a whole, arguing that the fame of Where the Wild Things Are has comprehensively concealed the breadth of his genius as a book illustrator.