

Press Release

04/09/15

A Guide to the Short Story Programme for Longford Writers

Mentoring is one of the most effective supports artists can receive as they struggle to develop their talents and their crafts. In the tradition of the master craftsman and his apprentice the aspiring artist learns at first-hand how to develop and hone his or her talents directly from an established artist.

Longford County Arts Office is currently offering the opportunity for a small number of committed prose writers to participate in a ten week programme with writer Alan McMonagle. Potential participants should therefore have an interest in the short story form. Classes will have a different focus each week covering such areas as: finding a voice, beginnings – opening lines paragraphs and chapters, constructing characters, dialogue, place/setting, engaging the reader, conflict, point of view, editing, presenting your work for publication

As for selection, this is a Guide to the Short Story and so will be focused solely on the elements of an effective piece of short fiction. Writers wishing to participate should submit a piece of sample prose, no longer than 500 words (which should either comprise a short story or an excerpt from one) to alanmcmonagle@eircom.net market “Short Story Course” no later than 5.30pm Thursday September 17th. Successful applicants will be informed on, or before Friday September 25th. The course is subsidised by Longford County Arts Office and will therefore be free for all participants.

The ten week course commences on Wednesday 7th October in the Ardagh Creativity (Heritage) Centre and will run from 7.30pm – 9.30pm. All applications and submissions should be e-mailed to the above address and not to the County Arts Office.

Ends

Words 282

Notes to the Editor: Alan McMonagle has published two collections of short stories. *Liar Liar*, his first collection (Wordsonthestreet, 2008) was nominated for the Frank O'Connor Award for the short story. The title story from his second collection, *Psychotic Episodes* (Arlen House, 2013) was nominated for a Puchcart Prize. Alan has received awards for his work from the Professional Artists' Retreat in Yaddo (New York), the Fundación Valparaiso (Spain), the Banff Centre for Creativity (Canada) and the Arts Council of Ireland. He has contributed stories to many journals in Ireland and North America including *The Adirondack Review*, *The Valparaiso Fiction Review*, *Natural Bridge*, *Grain*, *Prairie Fire*, *Southword* and *The Stinging Fly*. A radio play *Oscar Night* has just been produced by RTE. Alan holds an MA in Writing from NUI, Galway.