

## Story Cities – a call for flash fictions

*'The city is redundant: it repeats itself so that something will stick in the mind . . .  
Memory is redundant: it repeats signs so that the city can begin to exist'*

– Marco Polo to Kublai Khan in Italo Calvino's *'Invisible Cities'*

In Calvino's masterful work, Marco Polo explores images of distant cities where time, space, objects and individuals are presented in visions. Each description is filled with varying degrees of enchantment, absurdity, impossibility and allure. The weaving of these accounts questions what is real and unreal; recollections of disparate lands invoke the realisation that perhaps all reveal a single place so that:

*'the more one was lost in unfamiliar quarters of distant cities, the more one understood the other cities he had crossed to arrive there'* (Calvino).

The **city** is a place where populations meet and strangers pass one another. Where stories are created, told, remembered and discarded. One city connects us to the memory or spirit of another; repeating rituals and behaviours which provide spectacle for the tourist and uniformity for the global citizen. As we move within the city we operate within the systems that transport us, the signs that guide us, the encounters that confront us and the thoughts which carry us.

### Brief – call for submissions

This brief invites submissions for new short works of fiction in any genre that address the theme of the city. It asks you to explore the journeys we take; the situations we encounter and interact with; the dialogues and connections we make – in order to highlight universally shared experiences and understandings of the city and / or imagine them differently. **Working under one (per story) of the following themes:** the Market, Square, Café, Hotel, Park, Station and Port, Main Street, Side Street, Crossroads, On the train, On the bus / tram – writers are asked to create narratives that speak of / to / through the city.

### About

**Story Cities** is a collaborative research project initiated by lecturers at the University of Greenwich, London – Rosamund Davies, Senior Lecturer in *Media and Creative Writing* and Kam Rehal, Senior Lecturer in *Graphic and Digital Design*. It explores ways in which stories might respond to, reference, reflect and re-imagine the city. Selected works will be published within a physical book that readers can carry into cities – to experience the city through stories. Acting as guides, companions and tools for reflection, we hope that the stories can encourage the reader to experience the city differently. You are invited to participate in this project by submitting new short works of fiction in any genre that address the theme of the city.

### Guidance

There are a set of guidelines that we ask contributors to work with:

1. All contributors must be aged 18 and over
2. Each story can be between 1–500 words in length (no longer), excluding title
3. Up to 3 stories may be submitted by each contributor
4. Names of specific places must not be used – nor should characters be given names. Your story should be written so that it works in any city
5. All submissions must be works of fiction and the author's own work, unpublished and in English. If this work is under consideration elsewhere you must inform us immediately if it is accepted
6. All work must be submitted with author's name and a contact email – please do not supply any additional contact details at this stage
7. All work must be submitted by the named author and he/she must hold rights to the material
8. All contributors must sign and complete the attached consent form and submit this with their work(s)
9. There will be no monetary reward for inclusion in the publication but a copy of the book will be presented to each contributor.

Once we have received and considered all submissions we will edit an initial selection of stories for publication. By submitting your work to this brief you agree for it to be used as part of a collection, however, we do not guarantee that every submission will be included.

## Story Cities

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

#### To be completed for all submissions

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#### Information

##### If you have any questions please contact:

Kam Rehal and Rosamund Davies at the University of Greenwich on: [StoryCities@gre.ac.uk](mailto:StoryCities@gre.ac.uk)  
+44(0)20 8331 9013

All information supplied (names, email addresses and creative work) will be held in a secure location. Online files will be stored on a password protected local hard drive. Memory cards and USB sticks, if used, will also be kept in a locked cabinet. This information will be retained for up to two years following publication of the book. It will be disposed of securely, either through shredding or deletion from all devices – with the exception of the printed publication itself. You are free to withdraw from this project at any time prior to publication of the book.

#### By signing this form and submitting work to this brief you agree that:

You are aged 18 or over.

The submission is your own work and you hold the rights to it.

You have read the information and guidelines about this project.

You understand that you can contact us to ask questions and discuss the project.

You understand that you are free to withdraw from this project at any time prior to publication.

You are taking part in this project.

#### PLEASE SIGN THIS FORM AND SUBMIT ALONG WITH YOUR STORY / STORIES TO:

**Kam and Rosamund at: [StoryCities@gre.ac.uk](mailto:StoryCities@gre.ac.uk)**  
**Deadline for submissions: 16/09/2018**

Your name:

Story title(s):

Email:

Signature: