





# INTRODUCTION

The British Council has more than 75 years of experience in building trust and understanding between individuals, communities and nations.

The team in Literature Department works with the best of British writers and sector professionals to develop innovative events and projects that provide opportunities for cultural exchange and collaboration.

With an emphasis on emerging markets such as the Arab world, India, China and Russia and with links to over 100 countries worldwide, our work tends to fall into the following areas:

Live Literature

Creative Reading

Creative Writing

Publishing

Translation

Literature in Education



# IVE LITERATURE



Galle  
Literary  
Festival,  
Sri Lanka

Live literature brings writers face to face with audiences and provides a platform for collaboration and cultural exchange.

This year we have held international seminars in Cambridge and Walberberg, Germany as well as a British tour of spoken word artists from South East Asia and the UK. We have worked with authors at the Edinburgh Book Case, Hay Festivals in Spain and Columbia, Jaipur Literary Festival, Kolkata Book Fair, Galle Literary Festival Sri Lanka, the fringe at EAIFL Dubai, the Athens Children's and Young People's Book Fair, The Man Hong Kong Literature Festival, Cairo International Book Fair, London Book Fair and Jewish Book Week.

### Speechless

Speechless brought together artists from South East Asia and the UK to write and perform work on the theme of freedom of expression and was the culmination of the three year Animating Literature project. Working in partnership with Apples & Snakes and Arts Council England, we commissioned artists from Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam and the UK to produce new work that toured in nine cities and deliver workshops.

### Cambridge Seminar

The Cambridge Seminar on Contemporary Literature is a bi-annual event that attracts up to 45 participants from all around the world including writers, translators, academics, broadcasters, literary journalists, agents and festival managers. The Seminar provides participants with a unique opportunity to listen to and meet some of our leading writers in an informal atmosphere.

“ Sri Lanka and Britain are oceans apart but when I tell a tale, what we discover at once is not what divides us in our cultures, but what links is our lives, how we deal with the human condition, with the world about us. It is empathy that we learn from reading, from listening to one another's stories, and with both come knowledge and understanding.”

Michael Morpurgo, Author on his visit to Sri Lanka





## UK Guest of Honour programmes

To celebrate the British Council's 70th Anniversary in Greece, the British Council worked with the **Athens Children's and Young People's Book Fair** on the UK Guest of Honour cultural programme. Over four days, 13 UK writers and experts in the field of young adult literature along with Greek counterparts, took part in 28 literary events, including readings, discussions, performance poetry shows, storytelling, networking events and workshops in illustration/graphic novels, creative writing, creative thinking and skills development.

We also worked with the **41st Cairo International Book Fair** in partnership to deliver a programme which encompassed the 'full circle' of literature from reading to writing and publishing. British writers including Ben Okri, Dame Margaret Drabble, Anthony Horowitz and Menna Elfyn read from their work and took part in a series of public panel discussions, a poetry evening and literary cafes at the fair.

“ It really was one of the richest cross-cultural experiences I've ever had, and such a rare opportunity to get under the skin of another country. There's something about talking to people 'on the ground' that makes all the difference. ”

Meg Rosoff, Author

# Creative Reading



Animating Literature workshop, Vietnam

Creative reading promotes reading as a powerful creative activity that is both private and shared.

In building the individual it can also contribute to the building of better communities and offer common ground on which to create partnerships that lead to greater understanding between individuals across social and national boundaries.

### Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

We invited specialist David Kendall who gave workshops to both students and teachers in the Children's Corner on how to encourage reluctant readers and looked at how the graphic novel, comics and digital media can be used to engage young people with reading.

### Chatterbooks

Our international pilot of Chatterbooks aims to link children and young people around the world to share their reading experiences. Through the global school-links Connecting Classrooms programme we are running an international pilot of the Reading Agency's UK-based Chatterbooks project, the first nationally-coordinated reading group project for children. The project will encourage children and young people in the UK, Ghana, Egypt and China to read adventurously, become confident in talking about books, share their reading experiences and exchange ideas.

Chatterbooks already works really well in UK libraries, enriching children's reading by enabling discussions about books, reading and authors. As a result, children gain confidence, form reading opinions, widen their reading, and have fun on the way. It's great to be working with the British Council on Connecting Classrooms Chatterbooks because it allows children to share reading across the globe.

Liz Dubber, The Reading Agency on Chatterbooks



# C REATIVE WRITING



Photo: Graham Mort

Radiophonics workshop, Nigeria

The UK is at the forefront in recognising the value of creative writing as a skill that can be developed and nurtured with professional guidance.

In developing new writing talent both in the UK and internationally, we believe we can encourage self-expression and enable dialogue that reaches across cultures and frontiers.

### Medi-café online creative writing programme

Medi-café is an online creative writing programme for emerging writers from North Africa run in partnership with the University of London in Paris. Writers from Morocco and Tunisia work alongside UK mentors and benefit from online coaching, workshops and seminars as well as having their work published on the dedicated website.

### Radiophonics

Radiophonics is an online creative writing project focussing on writing for radio. Working in partnership with the Centre for Transcultural Writing & Research at Lancaster University the British Council organised creative writing workshops for emerging Nigerian writers led by tutors from the UK.

### City of Stories

As part of the Creative Cities project, 'City of Stories' was the first of a two year creative writing project that developed writers' ability to draw on their environment for the creation of work. Created in partnership with Spread the Word, workshops included a walking exploration of Kuala Lumpur as the basis for creating new work.

I strongly believe that the Medi-Café project is very beneficial. The project is more than just a creative writing: it is a huge mixture of cultural values and literature.

Youssef Arrous, Writer on Medi-Café



Our work  
around  
the world  
2009-10

Writer in  
Residence  
**Washington**

London  
Book Fair  
**UK**

Walderberg  
Seminar  
**Germany**

Cairo  
International  
Book Fair  
**Egypt**

Moscow  
Literary  
Festival  
**Russia**

Connections  
through  
Culture  
**Shanghai**

Hay Festival  
Cartagena  
**Columbia**

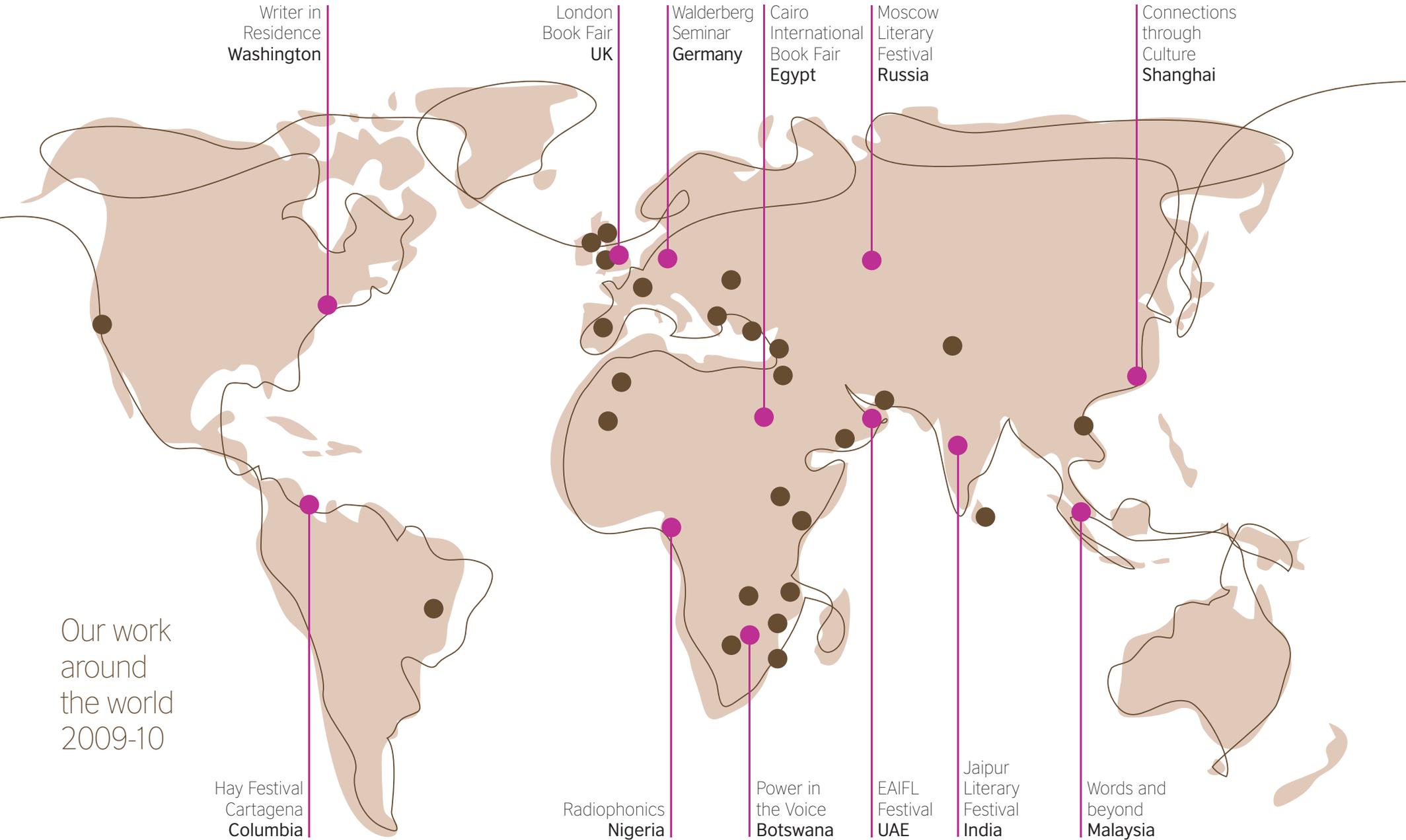
Radiophonics  
**Nigeria**

Power in  
the Voice  
**Botswana**

EAIFL  
Festival  
**UAE**

Jaipur  
Literary  
Festival  
**India**

Words and  
beyond  
**Malaysia**



# PUBLISHING

The British publishing industry is one of the most productive and creative in the world with UK publishers selling an estimated 855 million books in 2008.

Every spring the UK hosts The London Book Fair, one of the leading global events for rights negotiation and the sale and distribution of content. For the last two years, The British Council has delivered the cultural programme for the market focus at the fair. We also work with publishers, agents, scouts, distributors and other industry professionals in the UK and the rest of the world to generate an exchange of knowledge and ideas and create new opportunities for intercultural partnerships.

## Indian Publisher's training

In partnership with London Book Fair we organised a training programme for 38 Indian publishers who were exhibiting at The London Book Fair. The training, conducted by Sheila Lambie of Oxford Brookes University, Ray McLellan of Motilal Banarsidass and Susie Nicklin, Director Literature, British Council, prepared the publishers for making the most of the market focus opportunity.



Photo: Pablo Rossello

Printing Press, Jaipur

## Chinese Publishers Study Tour in the UK

Following the successful China-UK Forum on the Marketing of Literature in Translation in Shanghai, 13 Chinese publishers participated in a week-long study tour of marketing in the UK publishing industry. The tour provided an opportunity for the Chinese publishers to meet a number of professionals in London and Edinburgh and to gain a greater understanding of the British publishing scene.

 This visit has changed my perception of the UK publishing industry.

Yang Yansong, People's Publishing House, The Oriental Press, Chinese Study Tour

Through this study tour, direct links were set up between the Chinese publishers and UK publishing houses. The most beneficial thing for me was the face-to-face meeting with UK publishers and professionals.

Feng Tao, Shanghai Translation Publishing House, Chinese Study Tour





Photo: David Lake

India Market  
Focus, London  
Book Fair  
2009

## London Book Fair – India through Fresh Eyes

India was centre stage at the London Book Fair 09 when the British Council played host to a delegation of over 50 Indian writers, translators, critics, academics and industry professionals who took part in a varied programme of events around the themes of cultural and linguistic diversity designed to enable better understanding between India and the UK.

As well as a full and diverse programme of seminars and gatherings at the London Book Fair, there were events held at Foyles, The British Library, Shakespeare's Globe as well as eight other cities around the UK. Overall 15 Indian major languages were represented in 50 events spread across a week as part of India Through Fresh Eyes initiative, making it the largest festival of Indian writing outside the subcontinent to date.

The work continues with UK authors participating in Indian literary festivals and working closely with top Indian universities to ensure that contemporary writing from the UK is made available in the curriculum. A series of literary translation workshops are also planned for the coming year.

In profile

“ There is a wide range of exciting Indian writing which is still not accessible to readers outside India. Our programme in and around the fair revealed why India is such an exciting market for writing, reading and publishing.

Sujata Sen, Director, British Council East India

Just getting so many distinguished writers, commentators and academics from both countries together in one place was a great achievement. Combining the elements together so the chemistry worked really well was another.

Richard Alford, Charles Wallace India Trust



# TRANSLATION



Bookseller,  
Jaipur

Over the last decade, the British Council has supported a range of literary translation activities globally, working with key organisations and figures in the field.

Our work in translation ranges from translation workshops to promoting minority languages by including them in our programming. Our most recent work includes a publishers' seminar in Shanghai on the marketing of translated fiction and the provision of simultaneous translation for speakers at our events.

By increasing access, demand and quality of British literature in translation, particularly in areas of less trust, we can reach beyond English-speaking audiences and build a greater understanding with the UK.

## Connections through Culture Forum, Shanghai

Connections through Culture is a programme run in partnership with the DCMS, FCO, Welsh Assembly and Creative Scotland that works to provide links between cultural institutions so they can learn from one another and form lasting networks. This year's forum focused on the marketing of literature in translation.

## Writer's Chain, Jaipur Literature Festival

Following a translation retreat, we brought eight writers each from India and the UK to Jaipur for a session called 'Found in Translation.' Sharing a dozen languages between them, they came together for readings and discussions on the themes of literary translation and cross-cultural exchange.

I think this successful forum has achieved its goal: to be a bridge between the publishing sectors of the two countries. I hope there will be more such cross culture events in the future.

Ms. Xu Dan, Baihuazhou Literature and Arts Publishing House,  
China-UK Forum on Marketing Literature in Translation

By taking the writers to London and then to various cities across the UK, we can broaden the audience for international literature and show that writing can cross linguistic borders with ease.

Francesca Rhydderch, Wales Literature Exchange on the Writer's Chain



# LITERATURE IN EDUCATION



Animating  
Literature,  
Singapore

We work with UK experts to provide support to educational policy makers and practitioners involved in the teaching of literature.

Our projects include training packages and resources for professionals involved in curriculum setting and development, teaching English language and intercultural understanding through literature, creative writing education and literature at tertiary level.

### Animating Literature: Words and Beyond February 2009

This seminar explored the value of developing visual and verbal literacy in the English Primary classroom within an international context. Participants included English language teachers and teacher trainers as well as curriculum designers, textbook writers and educational managers in the field of English teaching. UK speakers included the popular writer and illustrator Oliver Jeffers, and literacy and educational expert Janet Evans and ELT specialist and storytelling professional Carol Read.

### USA Writing Residencies

The Writer in Residence programme challenges students at major US Universities to question their pre-conceived notions of UK literature and society through exposure to contemporary writers. In 2009, John Siddique was Writer in Residence at UCLA. From Spring 2010, Howard Jacobson is the Writer in Residence at George Washington University in Washington.

 I learnt that picture books help promote language learning in a comprehensible and interesting way. They can also be a tool for communication, not only 'words' but 'beyond'.

Dr. Pornpimon, Teacher on Words and Beyond

Students absolutely loved this residency. It had a profound impact upon them... this residency brings together my department in positive ways that we'd like to continue to build upon.

Professor Jeffrey Cohen, on the Writer in Residence Programme  
George Washington University





# VISIT ONLINE

[www.britishcouncil.org/arts-literature](http://www.britishcouncil.org/arts-literature)

[www.encompassculture.com](http://www.encompassculture.com)

[www.contemporarywriters.com](http://www.contemporarywriters.com)

[www.medi-cafe.britishcouncil.org](http://www.medi-cafe.britishcouncil.org)

[www.literarytranslation.com](http://www.literarytranslation.com)

[www.powerinthevoice.britishcouncil.org](http://www.powerinthevoice.britishcouncil.org)

[www.newwriting.britishcouncil.org](http://www.newwriting.britishcouncil.org)

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