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Photo courtesy of Kenneth Armitage Foundation

Kenneth Armitage Sculpture Destined for Sion Hill

A monumental work by one of the most important British sculptors of modern times, Kenneth Armitage, is due to be installed next month on the University's Sion Hill campus. The School of Art and Design is expecting to receive it on loan for a year from the Kenneth Armitage Foundation.

The 10 - foot high sculpture, cast in bronze, is one of his Richmond Oak series, created in the 1980s. Kenneth Armitage, who died in 2002, taught for 10 years after the Second World War at the former Bath Academy of Art in Corsham, where he became Head of Sculpture.

His work is now recognised as having made a major contribution to British sculpture of the 20th century. Professor Michael Pennie is helping to organise the transfer of Richmond Oak on the University's behalf from Roche Court sculpture park near Salisbury. He said: "This is a very generous offer by the Kenneth Armitage Foundation which reinforces our connection with him and enhances the academic life of the School."

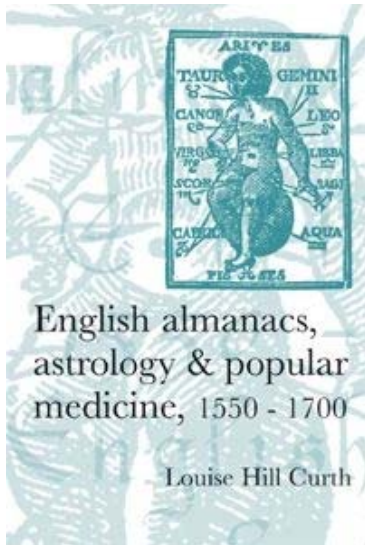
Preparations are being made to site the sculpture outside the entrance to Sion Hill's main building.

Same Health Worries After 500 Years - Bath Spa Expert

There's a national obsession nowadays with the state of the health service and our own health. But that's nothing new – it's been the same for hundreds of years, according to Dr Louise Curth from the School of Social Sciences.

People were just as concerned five hundred years ago as they are today about the effects of lack of exercise, binge drinking, eating junk food and pollution. Preventive medicine, now being trumpeted by Gordon Brown's government, has also been advocated since Tudor times.

Louise has documented these and many other fascinating health links with the past in a new book, *English almanacs, astrology and popular medicine, 1550-1700*, which is published by Manchester University Press. She describes how almanacs were the first mass media in Britain, preceding regional newspapers by two centuries. Printed in their hundreds of thousands and updated every year, these cheap booklets targeted everyone who could read across the whole country.



English almanacs,
astrology & popular
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Louise Hill Curth



The only survivor today is Old Moore's Almanac, but from the early 16th century they were extremely popular pocket-sized publications – and 80 per cent of almanacs dealt with health as the number one topic, relating it especially to people's belief in astrology and herbal remedies.

Louise, whose research involved reading more than 2,000 almanacs from archives in Britain and abroad, says: "They were written mainly by well-known astrologers and sold very cheaply by street sellers, travelling peddlers, shops and market stalls, reaching far more people than newspapers ever did in the 1600s and 1700s.

"The early emphasis, like it is again now, was on preventive medicine – advice on how not to get sick. The authors recommended a healthy daily regime – including exercise, sleeping for eight hours a night and drinking red wine in winter to warm you up – but only in moderation."

There are also similarities to the modern media in the type of advice given on diet. Almanacs stressed the importance of eating seasonal fruit and vegetables, with salads in the summer and hot garlicky stews in winter.

Louise has discovered that the parallels with 21st century anxieties about our health are extraordinary. Dr Curth concludes: "The modern mass media has a huge impact on health issues. My research on almanacs shows that people have always been concerned about their health. Almanacs were the Internet of their day – and just as popular."

Nigerian Author Wins Writing Competition to Study at Bath Spa University



Ngozi Ifeyinwa Razak-Soyebi

A budding author from Nigeria is being given the chance of a lifetime to study at Bath Spa University. Ngozi Ifeyinwa Razak-Soyebi has won a competition for Nigerian writers run by the University – and with it a £2,000 scholarship to join Bath Spa's MA course in Creative Writing.

Ngozi's short story *The Whip* was judged best out of more than 70 entries. She will be coming to Bath next autumn, accompanied by her four year old daughter Mima. The competition's runner up, Adeboyin Thomas, has also been accepted onto the course, again on a scholarship worth £2,000 towards the fees, for her story *The World is a Bubble*.

40-year-old Ngozi, who still lives in Nigeria, is gaining recognition as an author as her second career, having already achieved success in the world of science. She has a Master's degree in microbiology and worked for a number of years in the Nigerian pharmaceutical industry before leaving her job to write full time in 1999.



Since then she has received critical acclaim for her children's stories and won the 2006 Macmillan Writer's Prize for Africa. Ngozi said: "In Nigeria I am not as well known as an author like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, of whom I am a great fan, but I am getting there! I think the Bath Spa University competition is wonderful. I know how hard it is being an author all over the world, but I believe it is doubly hard being a writer from Africa. Any help we can get in terms of competitions and scholarships is truly welcome and appreciated. I can't wait to start the course at Bath Spa."

The School of English and Creative Studies decided to hold the competition, in conjunction with Bridgeway Overseas Admission Centre, as part of its ever continuing search for new writing talent in new places. Creative Writing course director Richard Kerridge praised the standard of entries, especially from the winner and runner up: "Their work explores the transitions taking place in Nigerian society. They write with great vividness, emotional power and originality of form – and both can tell a gripping story."

The competition was judged by the Nigerian-born author Segun Afolabi. The University is running a similar contest from now until April. This time it is open to writers in Ghana, again with a scholarship to study creative writing at Bath Spa for the winner.

Bath Spa Lecturer Shortlisted for American Literary Prize

The author Tessa Hadley, who teaches literature and creative writing at the University, has been shortlisted for a top short story award in the United States.

Tessa is the only British writer in a final line-up of three for the prestigious Story Prize, worth £10,000 to the winner. She has been selected for her collection of ten short stories, *Sunstroke and Other Stories*, which was published by Picador last July.

The book examines the emotional lives of middle-class men and women in contemporary Britain, from the 1970s to the present, in with characters ranging from teens to middle age. Prize officials say the stories are honest, insightful, surprising, painstakingly observed and superbly crafted.

Tessa has also written three novels – *The Master Bedroom*, *Everything Will Be Alright*, which was shortlisted for the Encore Prize in 2004, and *Accidents in the Home*, which was in the running for the Guardian First Book Award in 2002.

She is delighted to be a finalist for the American prize: "It's really exciting and lovely to discover that I also have keen readers across the Atlantic."

The winner of the Story Prize will be announced in New York on 27th February.

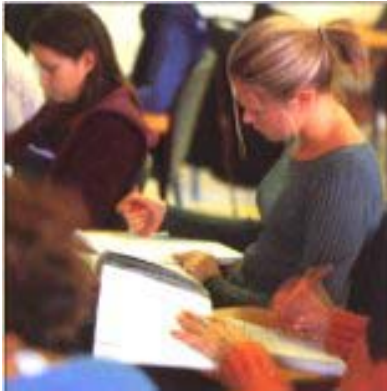


Tessa Hadley



A graduate from Bath Spa's MA Creative Writing Course, Nikita Lalwani, has narrowly missed out on another literary prize. Nikita had been shortlisted for a Costa Book Award (formerly the Whitbread Prize) for her debut novel *Gifted*.

Cash Prizes for Young Entrepreneurs



Bath Spa University is to reward the best business brains among its students and alumni. For the first time it's launching a competition to prepare them for the world of work and encourage the University's enterprise culture. There will be a prize of £1,000 for the winner and £500 for the runner-up in the Business Plan Competition.

The aim is to help students promote themselves to potential employers or to attract investors and customers if they set up their own business after graduation. Practical workshops will be available on how to convert an idea for a product or service into a written business plan and how to make the perfect pitch.

The competition should appeal particularly to third year and postgraduate students who develop business plans as part of their course work. The University's Business Support Office will provide mentoring and advice throughout the competition. The judging and awards ceremony are to take place on 15th April at Carpenter House Innovation Centre.

As well as the cash prizes, finalists will be offered the opportunity of going forward to the Knowledge West Enterprise Awards regional competition later this year.

Application forms can be obtained from Ro Dawson at the Business Support Office on 01225 875676 r.dawson@bathspa.ac.uk

WOMAD Summer School Draws Star Musicians



Billy Cobham

The line-up has been announced for this year's WOMAD Summer School, to be held for the second time in the University grounds at Newton Park. It takes place over five days from 28th July to 1st August as part of the WOMAD Festival.

Once again it's an incredible opportunity to learn first hand from some of the world's most vibrant and accomplished performing artists. The stunning line-up of musicians giving workshops and master classes includes one of the great drummers, Billy Cobham, who is also a dedicated and mindful teacher.



Among other top artists passing on their skills will be Egyptian master percussionist Hossam Ramzy, Chris Difford of the famed Squeeze songwriting partnership, West African kora maestro N'Faly Kouyate and acclaimed guitarist Justin Adams. Further performers are expected to be confirmed later.

The courses will provide a chance to be immersed in an exhilarating creative atmosphere with the broad swathe of cultural flavours you expect from WOMAD, offering endless possibilities for cross-pollination and jamming.

Early booking is essential. You can access more information via the website www.womad.org/summerschool.

Emma Achieves Best Ever Grades for Early Years



Emma Page, a part-time student at Weston College, has achieved the highest grades ever for the Early Years Foundation Degree course, run in partnership with Bath Spa University. Emma has been awarded the Principal's Scholarship, worth £1,000, by Weston after her work was recognised by the external examiner as outstanding.

Emma, who works at Highbridge Children's Centre, is now to have one of her assignments from the course published in the professional magazine Early Years Educator.

Tackling Student Employability



An Open Meeting on Employability, organised by Martin Sandbrook from the School of Social Sciences and Greg Garrard from the School of English and Creative Studies, proved a great success.

The event, held in December, was open to all staff with an interest in enhancing our students' chances of obtaining fulfilling, remunerative employment after graduation. A wide range of staff from across the University attended, and all participated fully in a number of discussion groups covering topics proposed by the staff themselves – expertly guided by Martin and Greg.

As a result of the meeting the '1812 Group' has been established, with a discussion board on Sharepoint: <https://sharepoint.bathspa.ac.uk/1812>. The site contains all flipchart feedback from the discussion groups (covering topics such as culture, developing skills learning outcomes, HESA reporting, the international dimension, use of live workspace, mapping outcomes, mentoring – and a summary mindmap). The Sharepoint is already being used as a useful source of material related to employability.



Prof Neil Sammells assured all staff present at the Open Meeting that the issue of student employability was high on the agenda of the Vice-Chancellor's Group, and that its strategic implications were being actively considered. He thanked staff for their invaluable input into the discussion, and commended Martin and Greg for initiating and organising the event.
