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Announcements

Our Writers:

~Noelle Sterne's forthcoming articles and essays appear in Unity Magazine, The Writer, Writers' Journal, 11.11, and The Moment I Knew: Reflections from Women on Life's Defining Moments. Book 2, Reflections on Women Series.

~Stephanie Haddad's debut novel, [A Previous Engagement](#), will be available on Amazon in paperback and via Smashwords in all major eBook formats starting July 14.

(RSVP as "Attending" my book release date for a chance to win one of 5 free paperback copies (signed!) <http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/event.php?eid=159729314095010>

Add [A Previous Engagement](#) to your book club reading list this year for a chance to win a Wine & Chocolate prize pack (plus free copies of my forthcoming second book, [Love Unlisted](#)) that your club can share. Book club members can email me directly at stephaniehaddad@yahoo.com for entry into the drawing.

For more information, anyone interested can visit my website: www.stephaniehaddad.com/fiction)

~John Bolen's short story Count Down the Thunder has been published on-line by Indigo Rising at <http://www.indigorisingmagazine.com/2011/06/count-down-thunder-by-john-bolen-it-was.html>. This short story is adapted from my short one-act play of the same title that was first produced at the Stages

Theatre in Fullerton, California with later productions at New Jersey Repertory and the Red Room Theatre in New York. Other short stories from this collection have already been published or soon will be published at the following links:

A New Year Me at Scars Publications and in December in their magazine Children, Churches and Daddies at <http://scars.tv/cgi-bin/framesmain.pl?writers> and <http://scars.tv/ccd.htm> .

Loreto to be e-published by the Front Porch Review in either October, 2011 or January, 2012 at <http://frontporchrvw.com/>

Tween Time to be e-published September 28, 2011 by the Eunoia Review at <http://eunoiareview.wordpress.com/>

~Marsha Mathews' Sunglow & A Tuft of Nottingham Lace has won the 2011 Red Berry Editions Chapbook Award

Our Artists:

Ken Steinkamp recently published a book entitled Street Lines in collaboration with the Cate Charles Gallery, Stonington CT . To preview it please got to <http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1754551>

Our Staff:

~Editor-in-Chief, Nicole M. Bouchard was recently interviewed by Brigitte Thompson of Writers in Business:

<http://writersinbusiness.blogspot.com/2011/05/nicole-m-bouchard-writer-editor.html>

Her short fiction story, "The Attic" is forthcoming in the Gunpowder Review.

Our Publication:

~The Write Place At the Write Time is now an official member of the CLMP (Council of Literary Magazines and Presses) and is also newly listed with Duotrope Digest.

~ Our publication was featured on Writers in Business:

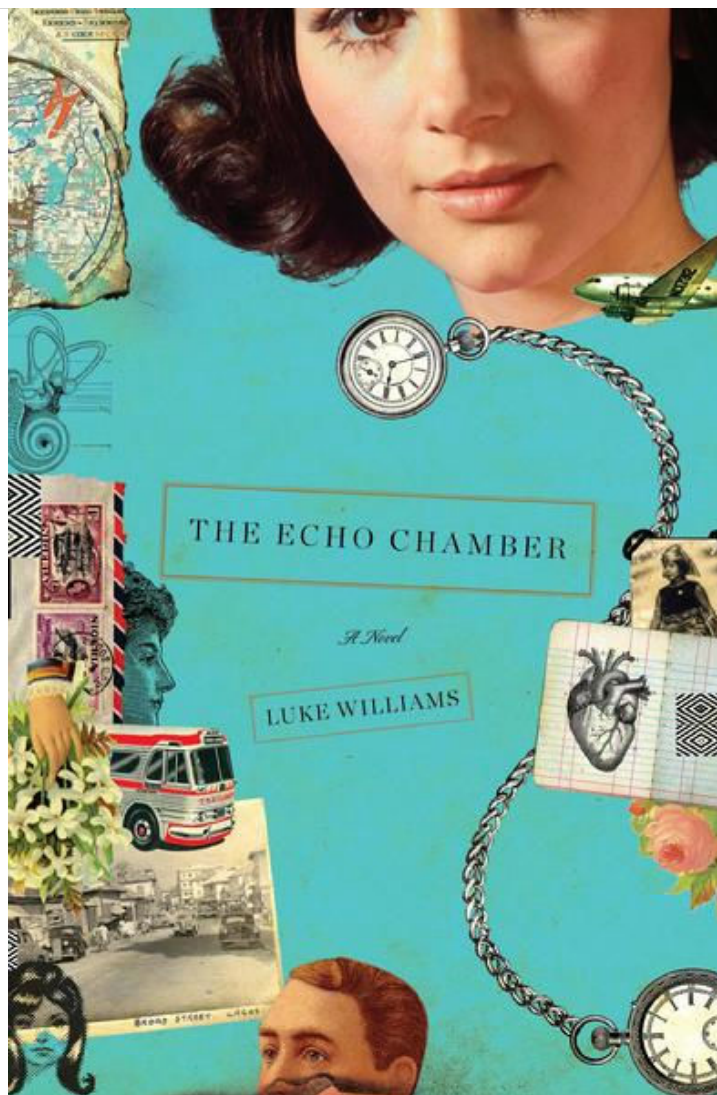
<http://writersinbusiness.blogspot.com/2011/04/write-place-at-write-time-with-nicole-m.html>

~We've begun a new blog devoted to the business aspects of writing, featuring exercises, articles and interviews as well as being the new home for our Professional Services offerings such as substantive manuscript editing, manuscript evaluations, online creative writing courses and our monthly newsletter service that includes e-mail consulting (blog includes PayPal for quick, secure purchase of service offerings). Visit <http://inscribingindustry.blogspot.com> and become a follower!

Check out the interview series on the new blog with our own Noelle Sterne who gives great insight into non-fiction markets and managing submissions- (<http://inscribingindustry.blogspot.com/2011/06/part-i-question-i-of-interview-series.html>).

~We have a presence on Facebook via our fan page & a brand-new Twitter account (@WriteplcWritetm) which offers insights, quotes, tools and resources throughout the week:

Visit Facebook.com and stop by The-Write-Place-At-the-Write-Time-literary-journal page



Cover Image of *The Echo Chamber* by Luke Williams; click image for more info

Readers' Corkboard

~ In participation with Viking Press, we have featured below a q&a with Luke Williams, author of *The Echo Chamber* and we are doing a free giveaway of the

book before it goes on sale for our readers!!! To enter to win, simply compose a fiction paragraph with the first sentence using the title of the book in it. The most creative entry will win! Send entries to:

contests@thewriteplaceatthewritetime.org

with *The Echo Chamber* in the subject line by July 15th!!!

Q&A with Luke Williams, author of THE ECHO CHAMBER

(Viking / On-sale: August 8, 2011)

You started writing THE ECHO CHAMBER as a student at University of East Anglia. How helpful was the course in shaping you as a writer, and would you recommend creative writing courses to others embarking on a novel?

The course was hugely helpful. It gave me confidence (the right kind, in the end—I think I began with entirely the wrong kind and soon had this knocked out of me), as well as the space and time in which to think and research and write intensively. All invaluable to a novice writer and one reason to recommend that aspiring novelists consider developing their projects on such a course. It also threw me into the path of other writers who've since become good pals, trusted colleagues and, in one particular case, my first reader and on/off collaborator. But I'd say the course's most significant impact on me was the term I spent studying with W.G. Sebald, our workshop tutor. I was already a huge fan and drew much inspiration from his books, but his teaching also shaped my work and my approach to it.

Your novel is clearly the result of both research and imagination. Was it easy to bring these two 'disciplines' together, and how do you think the historical record and the imaginative process fit together?

I wouldn't say it was easy, but since it was my objective from the outset to do just that, in a way, I had no choice. This approach—the fusing of historical research

and my creative response to this—defined the project at every stage. For me the imaginative process is essential in our consideration of the historical record, which can only ever be a partial account of events. Imagination allows us to question and challenge what the historical record presents.

The novel is set in various places, most notably Oxford, Edinburgh and Lagos. The first two are clearly well known to you, but why Lagos?

The idea for the novel emerged as a result of my undergraduate studies in history—a course I took in African Imperial History, specifically the British colonial legacy in West Africa. I originally wanted to pursue postgraduate studies in history in order to interrogate more closely the records relating to this period, in particular, the interstices or gaps existing within these. And then I realised that, for me at least, writing fiction was a more fruitful—and fun—way in which to explore this. It's very much a fictional Lagos which I present in the book—I've not been there, and I didn't want to go while writing **THE ECHO CHAMBER** since I couldn't visit the Lagos I wanted to write about. Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, and the notion that the idea of a city can in many ways be more compelling than the actuality, was influential here. I thought the Lagos in **THE ECHO CHAMBER** should be more faithful to Evie's childhood memory of it than the actual Lagos, whether in the '50s or now.

Sound and hearing are unlikely (but, in this case, brilliant) themes for a novel. Can you explain where your interest in the aural sense comes from?

This boils down to my beginnings as a large-eared child! I've always had a difficult relationship with my ears. For a long time I thought of them as appendages that really didn't belong to me or weren't really part of me. Kind of like a snake's skin or a hermit crab's shell. I guess I hoped that one day I might shed them. At the same time I had a strange pride in my outsize ears and there were private moments when I convinced myself that I could hear things that no one else could.

Another reason, more related to the book, is that I wanted my narrator to be a kind of History's child, like Oskar from *The Tin Drum* or Saleem from *Midnight's Children* or Azaro from *The Famished Road*. History's children are freaks. They

have—or think they have—special powers. And so Evie has—or thinks she has—amazing powers of hearing.

It's no secret that you asked a friend and fellow-writer to come up with the 'Damaris' Diary' section of the novel. Has this given you ideas for further collaborative work?

Yes. I never intended for Damaris' Diary to be written by someone else but for many reasons it seemed natural for Natasha to write it. We've recently begun work on a joint novel-length project. This will tell the story of the Chagossian islanders and their illegal expulsion from the Chagos archipelago in the 1960s at the hands of the British government, in order to expedite the leasing of the largest island, Diego Garcia, to the US government for use as a military base. The islanders continue to fight for their right to return and the UK and US governments still refuse to recognise this right. This will be a hybrid work which expands the way documents and texts are used in *The Echo Chamber*, and will develop the themes of displacement and the individual's encounter with power. Apart from the Italian collective who write as Luther Blissett, I don't know of other writers currently working this way. Collaborative practice seems to be more common in contemporary art practice, which Natasha and I are looking to for ideas and inspiration.

Was it a natural decision for you to decide to write from the point of view of a woman, and did it pose any difficulties for you?

Not a natural decision so much as a conscious one. My first attempt at a novel featured a protagonist not unlike myself at the time of writing—a neurotic, self-absorbed, 20-something bloke. With literary ambitions. I didn't get far into the book before I got sick of him and myself, and realised that if I wanted to explore the themes which interested me, and to remain engaged throughout a long-term novel-length project, I'd have to make the protagonist considerably different to me. Hence the 50-something woman.

THE ECHO CHAMBER manages to incorporate some strange, almost unreal elements (such as Evie's being able to hear in the womb, and being able to hear things that other people can't, etc.) into a narrative that in other ways is

all too real, and grounded in a very firm sense of reality. How did you manage to balance these elements? Was fusing them together a conscious decision?

Yes, this fusion was very much a conscious decision and in fact is key to the book. Part of Evie's project is to question narratives of power, and by extension, the role of narrative in enforcing power. 19th century realist fiction played a key role in endorsing the colonial project, and given Evie's self-appointed status as freakish outsider, it was crucial that her story transgress the boundaries of 'reality', which, after all, in fiction is never really 'reality' but just one account of it.

Your style of writing is very beautiful and distinctive. Who are your influences and the writers whom you most admire?

I'm far more a reader than I am a writer, and this is a list I'm constantly adding to: W.G. Sebald, Gunter Grass, Georges Perec, Sei Shonagon, Susan Sontag, Beckett, Bellow, Bruno Schulz, Lawrence Sterne, Bulgakov, Lewis Grassie Gibbon, Lydia Davis, Arundhati Roy, Ken Saro Wiwa, Dambudzo Marechera, Hannah Arendt, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Francis Ponge, Thomas Bernhard, James Kelman. And Natasha Soobramanien, writer of the Damaris Diary section of my novel, who's just written a stunningly beautiful novel called Genie and Paul.

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