

Writers' FORUM

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

I was interested to read Clare Swatman's view that writing journalism and writing fiction were very different, in the interview on page 6. A lot of the skills certainly are transferable, such as the ability to grab the reader and take them through a story. But she's right that you need extra discipline for a novel, where there are often no external deadlines. And I see what she means about not knowing where you are going when starting a book. A journalist is sifting through facts to find the best shape for the story beneath, whereas a novelist – unless they are basing their book on real events – starts with nothing and has to build everything up. That freedom can be daunting as well as liberating. But trying new things gets us out of a rut, as the Mentor points out on page 58. So what will you try?

Write soon, Carl



Don't miss issue #194 on sale from 16 November

Writers' Forum

Select Publisher Services Ltd
PO Box 6337
Bournemouth BH1 9EH
TEL 01202 586848

PUBLISHER Tim Harris
EDITOR Carl Styants
CHIEF SUB Wendy Reed

Photography and artwork
With thanks to Shutterstock
COVER IMAGE Tithi Luadthong

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Please note that *Writers' Forum* does not carry book reviews.

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Subscription rates (12 issues)
UK £38, EUROPE £49, ROW £56
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PRINTED BY
Precision Colour Printing, Halesfield 1,
Stirchley, Telford TF7 4QQ
DISTRIBUTED BY
Seymour Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue,
London EC1A 9PT

Registered in England. Registered Number
5450559. Registered Office: Princescroft Willis
LLP, Towngate House, 2-8 Parkstone Road, Poole
BH15 2PW. A catalogue record for this magazine
is available. British Library. ISSN 1467-2529

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