



Writers' Guild of Great Britain

Report to the General Assembly of the Federation of Screenwriters in Europe
and the Annual Meeting of the International Affiliation of Writers Guilds

Warsaw, September-October 2014

The Writers' Guild of Great Britain is a fully accredited trade union operating throughout the United Kingdom. We have 2,002 members made up as follows:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| ● Full Members – currently active professional writers | 1,167 |
| ● Candidate Members – aspiring writers | 694 |
| ● Life Members – retired professional writers | 107 |
| ● Student Members – category now abolished | 10 |
| ● Affiliate Members – agents and support organisations | 23 |
| ● Honorary Member – the Duke of Edinburgh | 1 |

Here are our activities over the past year:

In television

- We have secured significant improvements for writers who lost out due to BBC cuts affecting *Doctors* and *Pobol y Cwm*
- We are campaigning against BBC proposals to cut upfront pay for children's writers
- We have launched a campaign *Free is NOT an Option* against unpaid work in television
- We are working with other unions to combat bullying, harassment by managers and colleagues as part of the *Creating Without Conflict* campaign
- We continue to negotiate and update our minimum terms agreements with the BBC, ITV and PACT (representing the independent producers)

In theatre

- We have negotiated minimum rates increases with UK Theatre of 6%, ITC of 2% and TNC of 2%.
- We have achieved a minimum fee of £11,994 for a full-length main house play at the Royal National Theatre, Royal Court and Royal Shakespeare Company
- We actively supported the *Playwrights Progress* showcase for new writers
- The Guild is an active supporter of the *In Battalions* and *Lost Arts* campaigns to highlight the damaging effects of Arts Council and local authority cuts
- Our theatre committee is redrafting and renegotiating agreements with the Independent Theatre Council, Royal National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal Court and UK Theatre.
- We held our annual *Theatre Encouragement Awards* to celebrate individuals who work positively with playwrights
- We organised the annual *Literary Managers Forum* to discuss issues directly with the theatres and the production companies

In film

- We took a leading role in an international campaign to have the role of screenwriters recognised at film festivals, commissioning research and a detailed report, *Written Into the Picture*
- We are in negotiations with the BFI over the *Locked Box* initiative which will give screenwriters an equal share (alongside directors and producers) of profitable films to fund future work
- We hosted networking events with Directors UK

In radio & audio

- We have negotiated special fees for the daily First World War radio dramas over the next four years

In books

- We are writing a *Guide to Self-Publishing* due out later this year
- Our books committee represents poets as well as writers of prose and has been looking into issues of relevance to them

In animation

- We are finalising the *Guidelines for Animation Writers* due out soon
- We have produced a best practice guide for industry professionals in collaboration with the PMA (agents)

In general

- We organise our annual *Writers' Guild Awards* to celebrate the achievements of writers across all genres. The next awards will be in January 2015
- We held regional and national networking events, *Meet the Agents*, *Scottish Film Summit* at Edinburgh Film Festival, *Celebrating Writers* just to name a few.

Bernie Corbett
General Secretary
19 September 2014