

New BookTrust Writer-Illustrator in Residence encourages all children to put themselves at the centre of a story



Nadia Shireen announced as the new BookTrust Writer-Illustrator in Residence

Monday 26th February - Nadia Shireen, BookTrust Time to Read 2017 author and illustrator, well known for the *Cow Who Fell to Earth* and *The Bumblebear* among many other picture books has been appointed the new online Writer-Illustrator in Residence for the UK's largest children's reading charity, [BookTrust](https://www.booktrust.org.uk).

Nadia, who takes over from Taran Matharu, will be focusing on the importance of inclusive representation in children's books as well as why funny books are fantastic for children in her six-month residency.

Nadia Shireen says about her residency at BookTrust:

"I couldn't be more delighted to be Booktrust's new writer-in-residence, mainly because one of my favourite things in the world is talking about myself. Sadly, Booktrust have quietly taken me to one side and told me that a) I'm not actually moving in with them and b) I'm not allowed to just write a series of blogs detailing how great I am.

"With that in mind, I've grudgingly decided to use my residency to focus on a couple of areas of personal interest. First, I want to celebrate funny books; from silly picture books to witty novels and everything in between. Secondly, I feel it's really important that every young reader can see themselves represented in the books they read – regardless of gender, ethnicity or social class. And while it's important for us grown-ups to keep talking about it, it's even more important to get children involved in actually changing things."

Highlights of Nadia's residency will include asking other writers about how they make people laugh, sharing some of her favorite books along the way. She'll also be sharing thoughts around how she makes her picture books, and will be running a competition for primary school aged children as well as appearing at events during her residency.

Diana Gerald, BookTrust CEO said:

"We are thrilled to welcome Nadia as the next BookTrust Writer in Residence. This online project gives visitors to BookTrust's website an exclusive insight into the minds of acclaimed writers and illustrators. We fully support Nadia's plan to help children have more confidence to write themselves into stories. It's so important that all children can identify themselves and the world around them in the books they read. Because when they do, they are more likely to develop a love of reading and to aspire to become the writers and illustrators of the future."

The BookTrust Writer in Residence project has been running since March 2009 and has featured several authors and illustrators including Cressida Cowell, Sita Brahmachari, Patrick Ness, Polly Dunbar, Bali Rai, Matt Haig, Laura Dockrill, Chris Riddell, Sarah McIntyre, Philip Ardagh, Taran Matharu and Phil Earle. The residency encourages each writer or illustrator to explore topics that they are passionate about, with past residents exploring themes such as the power of stories, diversity in children's literature and the importance of libraries.

Keep up-to-date with all of Nadia's blogs [here](#).

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Notes to Editors

BookTrust is the UK's largest children's reading charity. We work to inspire a love of reading in children because we know that reading can transform lives. Each year we reach **3.4 million children** across the UK with books, resources and support to help develop a love of reading. Every parent receives a BookTrust book in their baby's first year. Our books are delivered via health, library, schools and early year's practitioners, and are supported with guidance, advice and resources to encourage the reading habit. Reading for pleasure has a dramatic impact on educational outcomes, well-being and social mobility, and is also a huge pleasure in itself. We are committed to starting children on their reading journey and supporting them throughout. booktrust.org.uk

Nadia Shireen enjoyed making homemade magazines and comics as a child, and during her time studying law at university and her subsequent career in journalism, she started to sketch again. After years of doodling in the sidelines, Nadia decided to pay more attention to drawing, and in 2007 was accepted onto an MA course in Children's Book Illustration at Anglia Ruskin. Her debut book *Good Little Wolf* received a mention in the Bologna Ragazzi Opera Prima Award, and went on to win the UKLA Book Award. Nadia's subsequent books have since been shortlisted for the Roald Dahl Funny Prize, The Sainsbury's Book Award and the Waterstones Children's Book Prize.

Nadia now writes and draws full time. In 2017 she partnered with Book Trust to promote their Time To Read campaign, and 700,000 copies of *The Bumblebear* were distributed to schoolchildren across the UK. She also contributed to the Great Get Together initiative, in memory of MP Jo Cox. In addition, Nadia is a Patron of the Ministry of Stories, and also supports the Penguin's Write Now initiative for discovering under-represented voices.

In her spare time, Nadia enjoys obsessing over music, cooking curry, hanging out with her unfriendly cats, going for long walks and getting lost in sheep fields. She lives in London but dreams of living in a castle by the sea with a small army of trained wolves.



For any media requests relating to Nadia and her books please contact:

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