

**JOANNA M Z GILAR**

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**PERSONAL PROFILE**

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I am a professional storyteller and poet, and have just completed a PhD on fairy tales and becoming-animal at the University of Chichester. As a teacher I have eight years of experience teaching English language and literature at universities in the Czech Republic and the UK, and have been running workshops on creative writing and storytelling since 2008. As a performance poet and storyteller I root my work in oral tradition and seek to explore the relationship between traditional story and environmental practice.

**EDUCATION**

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**2012 – 2015: Chichester University, UK**

PhD in Fairy Tales and Ecological Narrative

My PhD thesis was entitled “Demons, Daemons and Frogs: Becoming-Animal in Contemporary Narrative” and was supervised by Professor William Gray and Dr Hugh Dunkerley.

**2004: Oxford House College, Czech Republic**

Trinity College Certificate in TESOL

**2003 – 2004: University of East Anglia, UK**

MA: Creative Writing

**1999 – 2003: University of St Andrews, UK**

MA: English (1<sup>st</sup> Class)

**1991– 1998: Burgess Hill School, UK**

A Levels: English (A), Biology (A), History (B)

**PRIZES AND AWARDS**

**2003: University of St Andrews, UK**

Kings James IV English Prize

**2001: University of St Andrews, UK**

Psychology Prize: Semesters I and II (2001)

## EMPLOYMENT

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### ACADEMIC

#### **2009 – 2012: Josef Škvorecký Literary Academy, Prague**

The Literary Academy is an internationally renowned college of media and writing in Prague.

Modules I taught include:

English Language (BA)

Introduction to British Literature (BA)

Creative Writing and Contemporary Fiction (MA)

#### **2009 – 2012: Masaryk Institute, Czech Technical University, Prague**

At CVUT I taught the following modules:

English Language for Secondary School Teachers (BA)

British and American Literature (BA)

Children's Literature (BA)

#### **2005 – 2009: Charles University, Prague**

Here I was responsible for modules in:

English Language (BA)

Children's Literature (MA) (course designed and planned by myself)

### CREATIVE FREELANCE

#### **From January 2010: Storyteller and Performance Poet**

Organizations that I have worked with include the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy, Stour Valley Arts, Brighton Storytellers, London Dreamtime and the Italian Body&Society Lab.

#### **October 2012 – October 2014: The ONCA Centre for Arts and Ecology, Brighton**

ONCA has been described by patron Robert Macfarlane as “an inspiring organisation”. A member of its founding team, I worked for two years as writer-in-residence and creative education officer, running creative writing workshops, performances and educational events.

#### **January 2010 – September 2013: Bridge Magazine, Prague**

At *Bridge* ([www.bridge-online.cz](http://www.bridge-online.cz)), a magazine for secondary school students, I worked as a feature writer, editor and proofreader.

## RESEARCH ACTIVITY

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### CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA

#### Symposia and Panels Organized

“Wonderlands: Reading / Writing / Telling Fairy Tales and Fantasy,” University of Chichester, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2015, Postgraduate Symposium.

I co-organized this in association with the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy. It was described by keynote speaker Professor Diane Purkiss as “a marvellous, intelligent and stimulating event”.

“The Role of Becoming Animal in Promoting Ecological Activity,” *The ONCA Trust Exile Debate*, University of Brighton, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2014, Symposium.

Funded by the Arts Council, I coordinated this event, which was chaired by interdisciplinary expert Alan Boldon and attended by internationally renowned scientists, artists, writers and storytellers.

“Reading Shapeshifting Narratives,” *Reading Animals*, University of Sheffield, 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July 2014, Panel.

This creative-critical panel consisted of myself, storyteller Jo Blake Cave and poet Susan Richardson. It was described by its attendees as “incredibly powerful”, and “astonishing”.

#### Papers Presented: Academic Conferences

“The Mirror, the Treasure Hunter and the Red Moon: Shifting Identities in Cornelia Funke’s *Reckless*,” *ASLE-UKI Biennial Conference*, University of Surrey, 29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013.

“Storytelling and Harmonious Dwelling: The Role of Fairy Tales in Environmental Education,” *Interdisciplinary. Net: 4<sup>th</sup> Global Conference on Storytelling*, Prague. 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

#### Papers Presented: Public Conferences

“Meeting the Other in the Fairy Tale,” *Scottish Pagan Federation Conference*, University of Edinburgh, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

“Animism, Paganism, and Baba Yaga: In the Skin of the Fairy Tale,” *AnderidaFest*, Southwick Community Centre, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

### PUBLICATIONS

“A Review of Jelena Curcic’s *Serbian Fairy Tales*,” *Gramarye: The Journal of the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy*, 7 (Summer 2015), 89-90

“Grimm Girls: Picturing the Princess: Exhibition Review,” *Marvels and Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies*, 29:1 (2015), 169

“Magic Mirrors and Shifting Skin: An Ecocritical Reading of Cornelia Funke’s *Reckless*,”  
*Gramarye: The Journal of the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy*, 6 (Winter  
2014), 58-69

“A Review of ‘Conteuses: An Evening with Kate Bernheimer,’” *Gramarye: The Journal of  
the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy*, 4 (Winter 2013), 67