

TWO CHAIRS CREATIVE WRITING RULES AND GUIDELINES

- Please note that the closing date for submissions is strictly **5 pm, Monday 2 March, 2018**.
- Entries should be submitted via email to Dr Carly Hegenbarth:
C.Hegenbarth@warwick.ac.uk in the formats prescribed ('Microsoft Word' or 'PDF') by that time.
- Please note that we cannot accept postal or email entries.
- Entries received by post, by email or after the deadline cannot be considered either.

More about the competition.

You are invited to write a piece of prose or poetry in English or German. Each entry can be as short as desired, though no longer than 1000 words. Please see the competition webpage (warwick.ac.uk/twochairswriting) for historical background on the Hafez-Goethe Monument. Entrants need not merely write descriptively about the monument, its history or indeed on any image of two chairs – although these might represent starting points in your creative thinking. You might think about two chairs on a train, in an airport, a waiting room, a classroom, an interview, a doctor's surgery – or you might start somewhere completely different. Importantly, what kind of experiences and encounters grew or might grow out of these two chairs, whether imaginary or remembered. Or perhaps your

However literally you take the chairs, you are encouraged to be imaginative, to think and write about relationships, travels, meetings, encounters and experiences you have had or might have, in which you have encountered people from different cultural backgrounds. This might have happened in an unfamiliar setting abroad, or been an unexpected experience in the more familiar settings of your home town. Think of occasions when you have been struck both by your cultural differences but also the similarities you found you had. Did you attempt to or succeed in communicating with someone across linguistic, cultural or religious barriers? Did you succeed in moving beyond dialogue and establishing a deeper relationship with someone, or with a group of people? Were you able to imagine the world from another cultural perspective, to build and explore empathy with people of other cultures? How did your thinking and feelings change? This might be an imaginative reworking of a real experience, or, alternatively, complete fiction or a future event you envisage. The choice is yours. The key is to try and reflect the fact that no two people are ever complete strangers, no two cultures ever entirely different – though neither are they identical. Your writing, ideally, should try to explore that richness.

Notes and stimuli for teachers/ lecturers

Adult entrants will doubtless be able to draw on a life-time of experiences in writing. If you are a teacher priming pupils to enter the competition, you might appreciate some ideas about starting points. You might build a piece of imaginative extension writing for German GCSE level pupils out of curriculum-based exercises on 'Describing Yourself and Others', or writing in a past tense about

a trip abroad. In 'A' Level German, the piece might be launched as part of one of the various modules on 'Multicultural Germany', or could be written in response to a set text, or film from the syllabus. At University level, the piece could be launched as a piece of language work (orally or written), a reflection on a 'year abroad' experience or, again, a reaction to a text or a film. Teachers of English working on creative writing projects are equally invited to muster entries by interested students. In the case of school's entries, please indicate the level of assistance given to any entrants in an accompanying email.

The judges will be looking, first and foremost, for original and imaginative treatments of the ideas underpinning the competition. Inventive and articulate use of language (vocabulary, description, the lyrical quality or 'sound' of language) will also play a role. For entries in German the judges will be also looking for linguistic accuracy and articulacy, though will take into account the age and linguistic competency of the entrants (especially for younger and non-native speaker entrants.)

The Prizes and Ceremony.

There will be four prizes of £250 awarded: two for the best pieces in both English and German by an under-18 entrant, and two for the best pieces in both English and German by an adult (18 and over) entrant.

All entrants, in particular the winners, will be invited to a prize-giving ceremony to be held throughout the afternoon and early evening of **Wednesday 9th May** (further details to follow), at Oxford's beautiful **Holywell Music Rooms**. The panel of judges, all of whom are established poets, writers and translators in their own right, will perform live, and the winners will be invited to read their work to the audience. In addition, competition winners will be invited to take part in writing workshops led by the judges in one of the competition's two languages – these will take place in the course of the afternoon in the buildings of **New College, Oxford**. Further details will be released nearer to the date.

We will certainly undertake to pay economy-level UK travel costs for the four winners, and hope to be able to offer further financial assistance to allow unwaged and school entrants to attend in greater numbers. More details on this will follow.

Please read the following guidelines carefully before entering the competition:

1. Entries should be the work of the entrant(s) alone. Any additional assistance given by teachers or others should be noted in email accompanying the entry.
2. Texts should be written in English or German. Entrants may have either language as their mother tongue, or be bi-lingual.
3. Entrants should enter individually, not in groups and submit only one entry each.

4. Entrants must be resident in the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland during the academic year 2017-18 (September 2017- May 2018). All entrants must indicate how long they have been learning German and/or if they are native speakers of German.

5. Entrants may not take part in more than one category within their age group.

6. Entries should be submitted as Microsoft Word and PDF formats only.

Any queries or questions should be directed to Dr Carly Hegenbarth at:

C.Hegenbarth@warwick.ac.uk