Martin Amis appointed Professor of Creative Writing
When the new University of Manchester was founded in October 2004, it was on the firm understanding that no-one in their right mind would have gone through the inevitable complexities of merging two successful institutions merely for the sake of creating a single, larger institution. Project Unity was not about size. It was inspired by a major opportunity for "step change" improvement - encouraged by a once-in-an-institutional lifetime chance to contemplate a thoroughly transformational agenda. What drove it was a willingness to entertain a singularly ambitious vision, and the courage to ask, Why not?

In planning our transformational journey, we knew from the outset that the key to success was going to be largely about people. The immense talent already present in the University had to be nurtured and grown. Creating an environment in which that could happen was the bedrock of the Manchester 2015 Agenda. But we also knew that creating such a transformational environment would mean bringing in new, virtuosic people - some of them genuinely "iconic" in status - whose presence would help us build higher and higher levels of excellence.

Accordingly, we have stressed the importance of attracting outstanding people at all levels. From PhD candidates and post-doctoral fellows to professors and principal investigators. We have sought a much smaller group - Nobel Laureates and others of equivalents standing - around which to build virtuoso teams. The aim consistently has been "step change" improvement in the quality of what was already a very good, professionally-supported academic community.

Manchester's success in attracting outstanding people has been achieved partly because the Board of Governors, recognising the importance of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), decided that the University should create a significant strategic deficit in 2005-06 to accelerate targeted recruitment.

That was a sound decision, but one with significant consequences, especially on top of the structural deficit that we had inherited from Project Unity. Mergers always create unnecessary duplication, but in order to give the new institution two years to settle down, a formal understanding was reached with the relevant Trade Unions that the new University would delay for two years any loss of jobs arising from any mergers. But ambitious agendas are never without cost.

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We now face the major, unavoidable challenge of addressing these two deficits – one structural, the other strategic – in order to bring the University budget back into surplus by the end of the 2007-08 financial year. On top of these planned deficits, salary costs, anticipated to increase seven per cent in 2005-06, actually grew by ten per cent because of a combination of the national pay settlement, pay and grading and incremental progression. University overheads were also higher, particularly because energy costs more than doubled.

In an overall budget of around £600 million, such deficits are manageable, provided that we take the necessary action. Indeed, the bulk of this financial management task was created deliberately in the best interests of the University. But active, effective action is now an absolute necessity. Operationally, that makes a managed programme on a significant scale of voluntary early retirements and voluntary severances inevitable over the next 18 months. If it also places a premium on cost efficiency and challenges us all to maximise revenue growth.

Transforming a very good university into a great one was never going to be affordable if it all involved was appointing wonderful new people and investing in the development of people already on staff. Building a profile of singular excellence was always going to involve "re-profiling", not just growth. Re-profiling enables the recruitment and development of excellent people to proceed by enabling other colleagues, less comfortable with an ambitious "step change" agenda to leave the University voluntarily and with dignity.

We have thus arrived at a testing stage of the journey to 2015, and the months ahead will call for wise, compassionate, effective human resource management at all levels. There will be no deviation from the essential task of building excellence across the institution. Key appointments will continue to be made, but at the same time the University must also be able to see the benefits in growth that we experienced in years one and two, and address structural anomalies carried over from the merger. That is why genuine, effective re-profiling has from the outset been a key strategy in the Manchester 2015 Agenda, and why it is now imperative.

Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice-Chancellor

THE University of Manchester has retained its place as the most targeted university by the UK’s top 100 graduate employers, according to a new survey. University of Manchester students are being targeted by more top recruiters for 2007 graduate vacancies than any other UK university students, according to High Fliers Research Limited’s survey. The Graduate Market in 2007. The survey questioned employers listed in The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers 2006, which includes a range of both private and public sector employers. Jane Ratcliffe, Director of the MLP, Careers & Employability Division, said: “Improving the employability of our students and graduates is a key goal for the University. At the MLP Careers & Employability Division, we work with colleagues throughout the University and graduate recruiters across the globe to develop and manage a variety of projects and events, all dedicated to equipping students with key career management skills and knowledge vital for future career success.”

“The results of this survey testify to the enduring excellent reputation which Manchester graduates enjoy with employers.”

The MLP Careers & Employability Division consistently maintains an excellent reputation amongst graduate recruiters. It has been voted the best higher education careers service in the country for four years running in the annual Association of Graduate Recruiters’ Barkers National Graduate Media Audit.

Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice-Chancellor

Manchester’s students remain most wanted

Martin Amis appointed

Martin Amis, arguably the leading novelist of his generation, has been appointed Professor of Creative Writing at The University of Manchester. He will be in position in time for the launch of the Centre for New Writing, due to open in September.

Amis will run postgraduate seminars at the Centre and will also participate in four public events each year, including a two-week summer school where writers will teach MA students from the UK and abroad.

He will be based in the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures, also home to the leading literary theorist and critic, Professor Terry Eagleton. His reputation, established over three decades, has been built on a constant flow of significant, often controversial novels – he is currently working on his twelfth. In addition, he has published collections of short stories, highly-cited critical essays and countless articles on a wide range of issues and has won a string of literary awards. He is best known for his "informal trilogy" Money (1984), London Fields (1989) and The Information (1995).

"At 57, I feel ready for a fresh milieu and I think I may have something to offer as a teacher," he says. "It has always been a quiet ambition of mine. I have written a lot of fiction and a lot about fiction, so I’ll be bringing a dual perspective to it. I am also keen to find out about that shadowy and inscrutable demographic group – the young.”

John McAuliffe, co-director with Ian McGuire of the new Centre, says: "The creative writing programme at Manchester has long been one of the best in the country, but the foundation of the Centre and the appointments of Martin Amis and Patricia Duncker mean that we will continue to attract – and provide a terrific apprenticeship for – talented new novelists, poets and critics. Martin and Patricia are both writers who are interested in the broad sweep of contemporary culture, so the Centre will be a prominent platform for the best new creative and critical writing being produced in the UK."

Award-winning novelist and short story writer Patricia Duncker, who came as the University’s first Professor of Creative Writing in January, previously held the Chair at East Anglia. The Irish poet Vona Groarke is another new appointee. This is Martin Amis’s first academic post. His famous novelist father, Sir Kingsley Amis, also became a teacher, holding appointments at Swansea, Princeton and Cambridge.

Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice-Chancellor, welcoming his appointment, says: “It will be a wonderful opportunity for our creative writing students to learn their craft from so distinguished a novelist. We already have a major presence in creative writing, but this appointment confirms this as one of the leading places in the world to study it.”

See pages 10 and 11 for a Profile on Martin Amis

Research

most wanted students

Research

most wanted students

Research

most wanted students

Research

most wanted students

Research

most wanted students

Research

most wanted students
News

In brief

Vital Topics
Manchester Business School has attracted some of the world’s most influential business leaders to the region to speak at this year’s Vital Topics lecture series, sponsored by The Royal Bank of Scotland. The series kicks off in March and the line up includes:

Wednesday 14 March
John Patterson, Executive Director of Development, AstraZeneca
Is There a Future for the UK’s Pharmaceutical R and D sector?

Wednesday 18 April
Willie Walsh, Chief Executive, British Airways
The Future for Flying

Wednesday 2 May
Keith Jones, Managing Director, PC World Group Cat with the Programme – Keeping Customers Happy with Next Generation Technology

Thursday 24 May
Val Gooding, Chief Executive, BLPU Why is Health Important?

Tuesday 26 June
Sandy Carter, Vice-President, SOA and Websphere Each event starts at 6pm with a networking canapé reception, prior to the lecture at 6.30pm and will take place at Manchester Business School. Tickets are £22.50 and can be purchased online at www.mbs.ac.uk/vitaltopics

Bridging the skills gap
An employment and training event aimed at improving career opportunities for local Ardwick residents took place last month. More than a dozen major local employers, including The University of Manchester were represented at the ‘Ardwick Works!’ event.

The event aimed to give residents insights into a range of employment and training opportunities within organisations which they may have perceived as being closed to them.

Steve Grant, Assistant Director of Human Resources at The University of Manchester said: “We would like to see an employer of choice and also contribute to creating new opportunities in Ardwick and this event was an ideal opportunity to build sustainable relationships with our local communities.

‘Ardwick Works!’ was so successful we aim to stage similar events in other areas of central Manchester later this year. As major employers we intend to come together regularly to look at what we can do collectively to support the development of job opportunities in parts of Manchester with high levels of unemployment and also share best practice.”

Manchester Science Park wins top award
Manchester Science Park (msp) has been named as Outstanding UKSPM Member Park for services to tenants and the local community. The announcement came at the annual UK Science Park Association (UKSPA) conference held at Edinburgh’s Heriot-Watt University Research Park.

The judges selected msp ahead of other UK science parks due to the outstanding services it provides to its tenants, the contribution it has made to the success of the City of Manchester and for its excellent environmental policies. CEO Jane Davies who collected the award from mathematician and tv presenter, Johnny Ball (pictured), said: “msp has evolved beyond all recognition in the last 20 years and it is great to have this progress acknowledged at a national level. We have outgrown the space available at our original location and now have three msp sites across the City of Manchester msp plays a major role in the Manchester Knowledge Capital initiative and winning this award will help us to continue to raise standards in our field and extend the range of our expertise even further.”

The judges based their decision on three main criteria: msp’s services to its tenants, its impact on the community and its environmental initiatives. msp provides free business development support to all its tenant companies including organising networking events, offering free business and marketing support and arranging access to Greater Manchester universities.

msp is home to more than 100 companies, and the University is a major shareholder.

Out of the blue
The Whitworth’s latest show, Indigo: A Blue To Dye For, has meant a surprise gift to the gallery of a significant textile donation by, Dr Jenny Balfour-Paul, an authority on indigo.

Dr Balfour-Paul worked alongside Dr Jennifer Harris of the Whitworth as a curatorial consultant to the show. At the show’s opening, Dr Balfour-Paul announced the donation of her renowned collection of indigo dyed textiles to the Whitworth.

Dr Jenny Balfour-Paul said: “I have spent over twenty years researching all aspects of indigos worldwide. On my travels, I have formed a unique collection... The cream of this collection is a main feature of the Whitworth Art Gallery’s exciting new textiles exhibition, Indigo: A Blue To Dye For, and it has been superbly curated by Jennifer Harris.”

“With much thought, I’ve decided to donate the collection to the gallery not only because of the exhibition, but also because of the gallery’s ethos, above all the exceptionally good accessibility of its collections for researchers and students. Manchester is also an ideal location both for its historical association with textiles and dyes, and as it’s a lively city with a large student population with easy links to other major cities. I am happily confident that this collection will be cherished, and available to inspire visitors from all communities and generations now and in the future.”

This major exhibition of art, craft, fashion, and design featuring historical and contemporary indigo-dyed artefacts from around the world is on show at the Whitworth until 15 April.

Millions for new nuclear research centre
A major new nuclear research facility is being built in Cumbria with £200 million of initial funding from The University of Manchester and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

The University and the NDA have signed an initial collaboration agreement, which will see each organisation invest £200 million over a seven-year period. The total investment is expected to reach around £400m over this period.

The money will be used to provide specialist research equipment and facilities and to drive forward research into radiation sciences and engineering decontamination.

The new laboratory will include accelerators and experimental equipment to study the irradiation damage and effects on materials and chemical systems used in nuclear environments, as well as cutting-edge computational modelling and simulation tools.

The new multi-million pound centre – which is expected to open within the next two to three years - will initially house around 60 staff and postgraduate students. It will be located on the West Lakes Science and Technology Park near Whitehaven.

The centre will have close links with the existing British Technology Centre (BTC) at Sellafield, which is managed by Nisa Solutions, and will form part of the recently announced National Nuclear Laboratory. As part of the investment agreement with NDA, The University of Manchester will recruit a team of new academic staff and will work to extend access into the BTC for academic researchers from other universities.

Professor Simon Pullkott, who has been appointed from the United States to head up the research into radiation sciences, said: “This is a major opportunity for Dalton Nuclear Institute and the NDA to build truly world-leading research capabilities in the fields of radiation chemistry and radiation damage on materials.”

Professor Richard Clegg, Director of the Dalton Nuclear Institute, said: “Signing the agreement with the University of Manchester and the NDA will allow us to carry forward our development in our ambition to make The University of Manchester into one of the world’s most prestigious nuclear research and education centres and will act as a magnet for attracting leading scientists and researchers.”

School holds position in world MBA rankings
Manchester Business School has maintained its position at 22nd in the world’s top business schools in the Financial Times Full-time MBA ranking, published recently. The School was ranked 59th in the world for international business and 49th in Europe for percentage salary increase of its graduates.

The School is now placed 48th in Europe and 49th in the UK, with particular strengths in its doctoral programme - ranked 2nd in the world - and in international experience, where it is 6th in the world and 1st in the UK. It is 14th in the world for the career progress of its alumni.

Professor Michael Lugger who joined Manchester Business School in January as director. He said: “We’re delighted to have maintained our position at 22nd in the world.
Early last month I met some of the latest cohort of staff on the New Academics Programme. Nearly all said that one important factor in accepting a job here was for reasons related to research. One then asked how we research with Goal Four in Manchester 2015: Excellent teaching and learning. “The answer is that we must, we can, and we are doing it. For a start, teaching students is what makes us a University rather than a research institute. Grants and fees for teaching also constitute a significant fraction of our income. So we should regard teaching and learning as core business where we must strive for excellence. A reputation for excellent teaching also attracts the best students from around the world. This reinforces our international reputation, and provides recruits to our research programmes who will become the next generation of researchers.

Evidence from around the world shows that excellent teaching and research are not mutually exclusive. Universities acquire an international reputation primarily through their research, and a strong research reputation attracts the best scholars from around the world. As enquirers in their research field, excellent researchers are still learners who can empathise with students and their learning. Excellent researchers also convey their subject knowledge and enthusiasm in their teaching (and our New Academics Programme helps that to happen effectively).

Our efforts are bearing fruit. Internal awards recognize and support teaching excellence, and we have seven National Teaching Fellows. Teaching materials provided online increasingly enhance learning opportunities for students, especially through interactive activities. Finally, the satisfaction levels revealed in student surveys increased notably last year compared with the previous year, although we would like more students to respond. So the students, who flock here every year can indeed experience excellent teaching and learning.

The University has received a prestigious building award for the Manchester Interdisciplinary Bioscience (MIB) building in recognition of the quality of its construction. The MIB on Princess Street was one of 200 construction projects selected from the 2,000 inspected in the past year by Manchester City Council’s Building Control Service which sponsored the award. The scheme received excellent practice across the complete of building projects which are judged against the Built in Quality Framework as follows:

- The £38 million building houses research laboratories, core facilities offices and meeting rooms over five floors, together with a sixth floor plant room, and can accommodate more than 200 research staff in up to 15 research groups.
- Work was assessed against a range of criteria including: safety; structural stability; fire safety; use of materials; sound insulation; access for all; control of materials; fuel and power; and weather resistance.
- Director of Estates, Diana Hampson accepted the award at a ceremony at Manchester Town Hall.

The challenge is on

After victory in the 2005/6 series of University Challenge, the University of Manchester team has made it through to a quarter-final match against Wadham College, Oxford, to be broadcast on BBC2 at 8pm tonight (5 March). Despite losing their first-round match to Merton College, Oxford, they qualified for a play-off match as one of the highest-scoring first-round losers, and beat the University of Bristol 200-140 in that play-off and the University of Reading 210-60 in the second round. The all-undergraduate team comprises Ciaran O’Lavin (English and Philosophy) (captain), Adam Clark (Ancient History), David Elliott (Mathematics and Physics) and Tim Hawkett (Music). The MIB team comprises Professor Bob Munn, Head of the School of Psychological Sciences, Professor Geoffrey Beattie and Drs Costain and Rachel Green.

The research team consists of Drs Costain and Rachel Green, who work with Craig English to install Hawaii’s first home solar power system, and with Rachel Green, who works with Craig English to install Hawaii’s first home solar power system.

The fuzzy farm

Head of the School of Psychological Sciences Professor Geoffrey Beattie is one of the three expert mentors in a new television series ‘The Farm of FussyEaters.’ The show follows the journeys of eight people who have problematic relationships with food, but are determined to change their habits and fears.

From borderline diabetic Craig who can eat nothing but potatoes, Weetabix, bread and plain crisps, to chocholohic Ruth who consumes five 400g bars a day, the participants hope to change their lives in a Lincolnshire farm house. Their experiences will help them change their ways. Geoff will help them get to the heart of where their dysfunction comes from and learn to modify their behaviour, whilst dietician Ignat Jocfan and chef Rachel Green encourage them to eat normally, healthily and usually.

Built in quality

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In brief

Professor’s accolade

A University of Manchester mathematic professor has joined an elite band of academics. Professor Nick Higham has been added to the list of academics listed in the UK and just 300 academics worldwide, so Professor Higham has indeed joined a select band.

The number of highly cited academics is one of the criteria used in some of the published world rankings of universities. Professor Higham’s full profile appears at www.highlycited.com

CESAR could hail cheaper and greener small aircraft

A £28,000 grant to engineers could help spark the development of cheaper, lighter and greener small passenger aircraft.

A team from the Power Conversion Group in the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering will use the money to investigate how current mechanical and hydraulic systems on small aircraft - such as private jets and those used for short flights - can be improved using more advanced electrical engineering.

Dr Nigel Schofield (pictured) and a small team of researchers will concentrate on developing electrical systems to operate external flight control surfaces like the rudder, wing flaps and the landing gear.

Replacing bulky mechanics and hydraulics with more electrical-based systems could allow a small aircraft to carry more passengers and therefore reduce the carbon footprint of each traveller. Less mass would also mean less fuel burn and less carbon dioxide being pumped into the atmosphere.

Dr Schofield said: “With the increasing popularity of air travel, the demand for smaller commercial aircraft is likely to increase in coming years. The project certainly won’t provide a solution to the huge problem of aircraft emissions, but it could lead to planes smarter and more environmentally friendly aircraft taking to the skies.”

The impact of braces

A major study involving the Universities of Manchester, Bournemouth and Cardiff has cast doubt on the assumption that orthodontic treatment improves psychological well-being.

A team of psychologists and dentists studied the long-term effects of both orthodontic treatment and lack of treatment when a need had been identified in childhood, in a paper published in The British Journal of Health Psychology.

Over a thousand 11-12 year olds were recruited to the project in Cardiff in 1981, and their dental health and psycho-social well-being assessed. They were re-assessed in 1986 and 1998 and finally in 2001.

Professor William Shaw of Manchester’s School of Dentistry said: “We revisited 377 of our original sample, and those who had been assessed as needing orthodontic treatment in 1981 and received it had straighter teeth and were more likely to be satisfied with them.

“However orthodontic treatment in childhood had little positive impact on their psychological health and quality of life in adulthood.

“For those who had not received orthodontic care in childhood, however, lack of treatment did lead to psychological difficulties in later life for those children where a need was identified but no treatment received.

“It can be concluded that, although in general participants’ self-esteem increased over the 20-year period, it was not as a result of receiving braces and didn’t relate to whether an orthodontic treatment need existed in 1981. This runs contrary to the widespread belief among dentists that orthodontic treatment improves psychological well-being.”

The team also concluded that the health or attractiveness of a person’s teeth is a minor factor in determining their psychological well-being in adulthood.

Karen takes the Chair

Karen Hassell of the School of Pharmacy has been appointed to a new Chair in Social Pharmacy.

Karen joined the University as a contract researcher in 1993 and has built up a strong reputation as an expert in sociological and health services research on the pharmacy workforce. She is Director of the Centre for Pharmacy Workforce Studies, a research centre influencing policy practice and debate on employment and professional issues within the profession.

“I’m delighted about my new post and looking forward to the challenges ahead, particularly expanding my role within the University,” she said. “I’m also keen to extend my workforce research into other healthcare disciplines, and hope to establish a workforce research network to share ideas and research that cuts across employment boundaries.”

Research

The University operates a one-stop shop for the supply of wholesale quantities of branded merchandise for: • Gifts • Promotions • Open Days • Conferences

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For individual gifts please go to www.manchester.ac.uk/shop

Prominent figures in journalism gathered at The University of Manchester recently to discuss free speech in the former Soviet state.

Professor Stephen Hutchings from the School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures brought together journalists and academics from Russia and the UK in a bid to raise awareness of issues surrounding freedom of speech in the former Soviet state.

The gathering is one of three debates on Russian media culture organised by Professor Hutchings. The other two will take place at the University of Birmingham and the Frontline Club in London in March and April respectively.

At the February event in Manchester, members of the public had a chance to question panelists in a “Question Time” style discussion.

They included President of the Russian Television Academy and host of the programme ‘Vremena’ on Russia’s Channel 1 Vladimir Pozner.

Colleagues also paid tribute to murdered Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya, who was due to take part in one of the events.

Professor Hutchings said: “There is great concern in the UK over the rising tensions between media freedom and the international security agenda in the light of terrorist activities in Russia.”
“I am at the point of my life where I want a new milieu and I think I have something to offer.”

Indeed, “following in father’s footsteps” is not a suggestion he takes to kindly, even though Sir Kingsley also became a teacher in later life – at Swansea, Princeton and Cambridge – for 15 years. “By all accounts he was very good at it,” he says. Now, at 72 and with eleven acclaimed novels, as well as collections of short stories, books of non-fiction and countless essays and critical pieces to his name, he is very much looking forward to his first academic job. “I always fancied teaching,” he says. “I am at the point of my life where I want a new milieu and I think I have something to offer. I have a vulgar curiosity about the young. I want to know how ideological they are and what effect modernity has had on them. I can’t think of a better way to learn about them, because nothing says you more open than writing fiction.” He has five children of his own, but “they only give you a partial view.”

So, whilst coaxing along new writers, he is clearly keen to learn himself and, as always, on the look-out for possible material for another novel. But his prime concern is for his students.

“When I was young I might have benefited from some guidance from a kind and helpful 37-year-old writer,” he says, with typical irony considering that he has something of a reputation for being an acerbic writer and a thorny crit. “I’m sure I can be helpful and gentle – knowing how vulnerable one can be – but they only give you a partial view.”

So, whilst coaxing along new writers, he is clearly keen to learn himself and, as always, on the look-out for possible material for another novel. But his prime concern is for his students.

“The challenge of not only teaching creative writing, but also assessing students’ work, exercises him,” says the poet, who went to work as an editorial assistant on the Times Literary Supplement - and wrote his first novel, The Rachel Papers, in 1973, when he was 24. Success was immediate - it won the coveted Somerset Maugham Award for best first novel in 1975, Dead Babies appeared, followed three years later by Success, whilst he was Literary Editor of the New Statesman.

In the 1980s, he produced what is considered to be his masterpiece, Money: A Suicide Note (1984), the first of an informal trilogy along with London Fields (1989) and The Information (1995). In 2003 came Yellow Dog and in 2006 The House of Meetings, his eleventh novel. He is currently working on his latest, The Pregnant Widow. “It is a very autobiographical, generally racy novel,” he says. “At a certain age, you become curious about what you’ve lived through and it is a matter of tweaking and mauling that material. Feminism has been the main issue in my lifetime, hence the title.”

Amis has always tackled big and distinctive themes, frankly and often controversially. And he has always explored them with a distinctive and innovative literary style.

So, he brings to his new job exceptional experience as a writer – and as a man concerned with the big issues. In a way, he is entering a new phase in a wider sense – he returned to England last September, after living essentially for more than two years in Uruguay.

He and his second wife, the writer Isabel Fonseca, moved back to London for the sake of their daughters’ (Fernanda, aged nine and seven-year-old (Cléo) education. And coming back has caused him to look afresh at Britain, Europe and what he identifies as the worryingly growing hostility towards the United States and Israel.

“I find that people here are very masochistic,” he says. “The tangle of ideologies that dominated Europe has peaked in America. The lesson of history is the desire for power – and the loss of power causes anger. Britain does not relish being no longer a world power. Islamism lost power centuries ago – and is still angry about it.”

When the Centre for New Writing is launched in September, Martin Amis will be there, raring to go, running postgraduate seminars and participating in public events – and coaxing that talent along, kind, helpful and gentle, knowing how vulnerable one can be exposing oneself to the real world through writing fiction.

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Acclaiming Amis

“You can’t teach talent,” says Martin Amis, newly-appointed Professor of Creative Writing. “But I believe it can be coaxed along.”

Considering that he never had any special tuition, yet has become arguably the leading novelist of his generation, he is genuinely enthusiastic about teaching creative writing. He did, of course, have what might be considered the huge advantage of learning at the knee of his famous novelist father, Kingsley Amis. But his dryly humorous response to that notion is: “He never gave me any tuition.”

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**CV**

**Name**

Martin Amis

**Writer**

Professor of Creative Writing,

The University of Manchester

**Bibliography**

**Novels**

- The Rachel Papers (1973)
- Dead Babies (1975)
- Success (1978)
- Other People (1980)
- Money (1981)
- Time’s Anomy Or The Nature of the Offense (1991)
- The Information (1995)
- Night Train (1997)
- House of Meetings (2006)
- The Pregnant Widow (2007)

**Collections**

- Einstein’s Monsters (1987)
- Two Stories (1994)
- God’s Dicz (1996)
- Heavy Water And Other Stories (1998)
- Amis Omnibus (omnibus) (1999)
- The Fiction of Martin Amis (2000)
- Vintage Amis

**Non fiction**

- Invasion of the Space Intruders (1982)
- The Moronic Inferno And Other Visits to America (1986)
- Visiting Mrs Nabokov And Other Excursions (1991)
- Experience (2000)
- Koba the Dread: Laughter and the Twenty Million (2002)
Taking it higher

More than 900 year 5/6 pupils from over 30 Greater Manchester primary schools have taken part in specially developed primary school Higher Education Awareness Days at the University this year.

It is part of the “Higher Futures4U” initiative which has again been supported by the Student Recruitment, Admissions & Widening Participation Division and The Manchester Museum.

As an Aimhigher activity all the schools taking part in Higher Futures4U are located in areas known to have low participation rates into higher education. For the vast majority of children, the visit to the University is their first opportunity to meet real students and visit one of their local Universities.

The awareness day is key part of the project and involves pupils taking part in carousel activities encompassing an interactive campus tour following a ‘day-in-the-life’ of a typical Manchester student (minus a visit to the Students’ Union bar!), extracting DNA from onions in the Manchester Museum and a series of Higher Education activities working with Student Ambassadors to find out more about the opportunities University offers.

Paul Shone from the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation Division, who coordinates the scheme, said: “Higher Futures4U is one of the key vehicles through which the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation Division is able to introduce young children to the idea of University for the first time through creative campus-based activities. Important pre-versus-post evaluation mechanisms have shown the project to make a remarkable impact in transforming the children’s previously held knowledge and attitudes towards higher education.”

Further information about the scheme can be obtained from Paul Shone paul.d.shone@manchester.ac.uk or 0161 275 2056 in the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation Division.

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25 March 2007 marks the 200 year anniversary of the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Act. To mark this, eight museums and art galleries in Greater Manchester, including The Manchester Museum, will be launching Revealing Histories: Remembering Slavery with a programme of performances and events to examine the history and legacy of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and the way it has shaped British Society.

A group of objects at the Museum which links to the project are manillas (pictured). Brass manillas like these would have been exchanged for slaves and used as currency in West Africa. At one time, a King manilla would have been worth one slave.

The economy of West Africa prior to European intervention was either based around barter or the use of non-currency based currency such as shells, woven cloth, weapons or beads. Jewellery was also used, and copper bracelets had been seen by early European traders being used along the coast of Africa. At the height of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 18th and 19th centuries this currency became the most dominant form used between African and European slave traders.

The currency devalued with the decline of the slave trade, although it was still used in Africa until the mid-twentieth century. It is impossible to say if the manillas in Manchester were used in the slave trade, but as they arrived here in the early twentieth century, it suggests they were collected as they were moving out of circulation.

These manillas act as a disturbing reminder of the monetary value placed upon people used as slaves during the time of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and highlight the financial impact the Trans-Atlantic slave trade had on British society.

For more information about ‘Revealing Histories’ events at the Museum please visit www.museum.man.ac.uk.