

CHRISSIE GITTINS was born in Lancashire and lives in Forest Hill in London. She studied at Newcastle University and St Martin's School of Art.

Chrissie's poems have won prizes and been broadcast on BBC Radio 4. Her first adult poetry collection *Armature* appeared from Arc to critical acclaim; **'one of the more striking debuts of 2003**. Gittins's deadpan tone and skewed perspective mark her out as **a true original**. (She) characterises her speakers through disjunctive, seemingly random pronouncements that manage to betray their vulnerability, longing and frustration – **she has a genuine gift**'. *Jane Yeh, Poetry Review*

Her second adult collection of poems is *I'll Dress One Night As You* (Salt, 2009). A sequence about Mary Hindle the machine breaker was accepted by Les Murray for publication in *Quadrant* magazine in Australia. Other poems from this collection have been published in magazines including *Magma*, *THE SHOP*, *Oxford Poetry*, *The Poetry Paper*, *Mslexia*, and in the anthology *Works 4* (Macmillan). Moniza Alvi wrote about *I'll Dress One Night as You* - **'very warm, very inviting, very mysterious poetry. Chrissie has a very tender sight'**.

Chrissie won the Belmont Poetry Prize for children's poems in 2002, and was a runner-up. Her first children's collection *Now You See Me, Now You ...* (Rabbit Hole, 2002) was shortlisted for the inaugural CLPE Poetry Award in 2003. When it was republished in 2009 it was selected as a Poetry Book Society Choice for the Children's Poetry Bookshelf, Spring Term 2010.

Her second children's poetry collection *I Don't Want an Avocado for an Uncle* (Rabbit Hole, 2006) was shortlisted for the CLPE Poetry Award 2007 and was a PBS Choice for the Children's Poetry Bookshelf. *Avocado* was also selected as one of four single poet collections for the 'Boys into Books 5-11' booklist (a £3 million backed initiative funded by the DCSF and administered by the School Library Association).

Chrissie has been guest reader on Carol Ann Duffy's Arvon course for children's poetry. She contributed to 'Poetry Pie' for Cbeebies TV, and to Michael Rosen's Oxfam CD of Poems for Children. Her poems are widely anthologized and feature in Michael Rosen's Puffin anthology 'A-Z – The Best Children's Poetry'. Her third children's collection *The Humpback's Wail* appeared in 2010. It is also a PBS Choice for the Children's Poetry Bookshelf, making a CPB hat trick for her children's collections.

Chrissie's short stories have won prizes, and been published in *The Guardian*, *Horizon Review*, *The Printer's Devil*, *The London Magazine*, *Litro* and several anthologies; five have been read on BBCR4 by actors including Anne Reid, Stephanie Cole and Penelope Wilton. Her stories were highly commended by Ali Smith in the New Writing Ventures Awards.

Chrissie's short story collection is *Family Connections* (Salt, 2007); '**most of them carry an insidiously discomfoting charge**', *Nicholas Clee*, *The Guardian*. She has read her stories at Newcastle and Salford Universities, the Whitechapel Gallery, Manchester Central Library, Lancaster Litfest, Foyle's Bookshop, the Edinburgh International Book Festival and on BBC Radio 4.

She has read her poetry at venues including the Royal Festival Hall, the British Council Bangkok, Manchester Central Library, Keats' House Hampstead, Newcastle University, Oxford University, the Troubadour Coffee House, and the Poets House and the Bowery Poetry Club in New York. She has also read her poetry on BBCR4 and at the Aldeburgh, Ilkley, Edinburgh, Huddersfield, Wigtown, and Hay Festivals, the Highland Festival and Wordplay in Shetland.

Her plays for BBCR4 include *Starved for Love* (starring Patricia Routledge), *Life Assurance* (starring Sorcha Cusack), and *Dinner in the Iguanodon*.

Chrissie's residencies have included twelve Southwark primary schools, Croydon Libraries, Bangkok Patana School and Belmarsh Prison. She tutors for the Arvon Foundation, has run workshops for the Barbican *Can I Have A Word* project, the NAWA/Writing Together Research Project, The Write Team (Bath Festivals), Able Writers, and she is a member of the Poetry Society's Poetryclass team. Chrissie was resident writer on the Shetland Isles in September 2010, and in January 2010 she was appointed the first honorary Writer-in-Residence in the borough of Lewisham.

Chrissie has received a Hawthornden Fellowship, two Arts Council Grants for the Arts, and awards from the Royal Literary Fund and the Author's Foundation. In 2009 she was included in the British Council Contemporary Writers database of the 600 writers 'regarded as the best of UK and Commonwealth writers'.

www.chrissiegittins.co.uk