

Literary City

REGULAR ROUND-UP OF PLYMOUTH'S THRIVING
WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD SCENE

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French writers arrive for Plymouth lit fest

AUTHORS, poets and musicians from Plymouth's French twin town will give a special performance of their work in the city tonight.

The delegation from Brest arrived in Plymouth on Thursday for three full days of literary events as part of the PlymLit16 literary festival.

Last night the delegation signed books and gave readings from 6pm at Waterstones, in Old George Street.

But this was just the prelude to the main event, tonight, when the writers and musicians will perform alongside Plymouth counterparts at Plymouth University's Jill Craigie Cinema.

"This is the centre piece event of the weekend," said Peter Davey, of arts collective Wonderzoo, which has helped organise the trip. "Plymouth and Brest writers will be performing their work, along with music."

He said the exchange could not have happened without the co-operation of organisations including Flameworks, Peninsula Arts, Plymouth Culture, Timebank Stonehouse, Waterstones, Plymouth University, the Brest and Plymouth twinning panels and the organisers of PlymLit16.

He said PlymLit16 was "fantastic for the city," and added: "It's fantastic to see so many arts organisations com-



LYRICAL PROSE: The writers will be joined by folk band Bepsort

ing together in different venues."

Among the French writers in Plymouth are Herve Bellec, a professor of history and geography and author of a dozen novels including *I Hate Sundays*, and *If It Was My Wife*. "He is a recognised key figure on the Brest and Britany literary scene, and his book *The White Night* won the Tristan Corbiere Prize," said Peter.

Alain Le Beuze is a Breton poet, who teaches literature in colleges and universities and was co-founder of the magazine *Poésie-Bretagne*.

Olivier Cousin is a teacher

in creative writing and has written for newspapers and magazines and in 2011 received the Camille le Mercier d'Erm poetry prize for his collection *Under a Lidless Sky*.

"Olivier has published more than 10 books. His latest is called *The Old Ghosts of Trassire Tristan*," said Peter.

Clarence Sophie Dany is director of Brest theatre company *The Here & Now*. Peter said: "She is an actress and director who studied drama in Australia, and became the director of the National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney. She has published a

book *The Old Barracks*, and has directed bilingual readings of Shakespeare's sonnets, and an adaptation of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*."

The writers are accompanied by folk band Bepsort.

"The specialise in traditional Breton music, performing sea shanties, ballads, stories and dance tunes," said Peter.

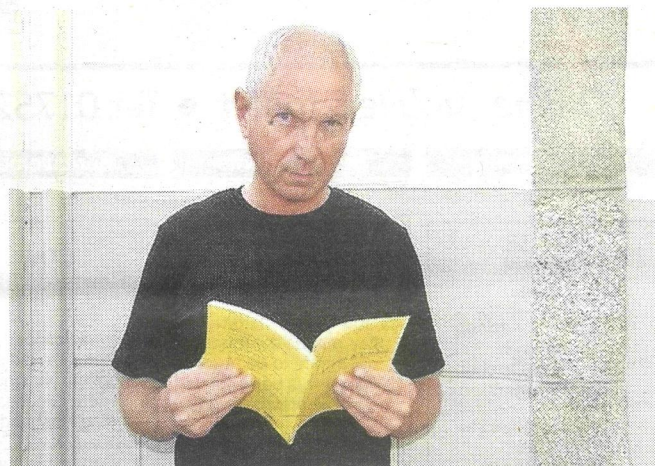
Among Plymouth writers joining the Brest delegation will be French-born Melisande Fitzsimons, whose poetry has been published in the UK, USA, Australia, and France.

Also taking part in tonight's event will be Plymouth's new poet laureate Thom Boulton, plus city poets Nick Ingram, Chris Parsons, and writer Laura Quigley, with music from cabaret performer Miss Von Trapp and the three-piece band Capri-Batterie.

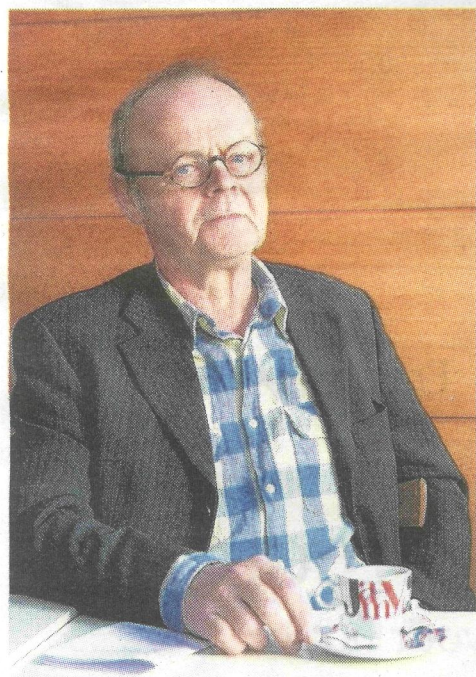
Tomorrow, the French writers will take part in a workshop, from 11am until 1pm, at 96 Union Corner, in Union Street.

"We will explore some of the weirder aspects of writing and poetry for the first edition of a journal which will celebrate the exchange of ideas between Plymouth and Brest," said Peter.

The workshop is free and open to the public and includes a buffet lunch.



PICTURED FROM TOP: French writers Alain Le Beuze, Clarence Sophie Dany and Olivier Cousin



KEY FIGURE: French writer Herve Bellec has written a dozen novels

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