

NEW WRITING NORTH

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New trustees join the board of New Writing North

New Writing North is the literature development agency for the North of England, based in Newcastle upon Tyne where it was founded in 1996. Chief Executive Claire Malcolm leads a team of 13 staff producing nationally significant work in reading and writing development, including the Northern Writers' Awards, Durham Book Festival, the Gordon Burn Prize and New Writing North Young Writers.

At the end of a successful year of adaptation and growth, New Writing North has further strengthened its board of trustees. The move comes as the agency progresses plans for a centre for writing and publishing in Newcastle.

The writer **Yvonne Battle-Felton**; brand, creative and communications strategist **Naana Orleans-Amisah**; and actor, producer and writer **Kim Tserkezie** joined New Writing North's board of trustees in December 2020.

These appointments, together with the six appointments made earlier in 2020 – solicitor Julie Boakes; chartered surveyor John Seager; cultural consultant Mark Dobson; and publishing industry experts, Mary Cannam, COO of Faber & Faber; Clare Harington, former Communications Director for Hachette UK; and Sara Lloyd, Digital and Communications Director for Pan Macmillan – mean the board, chaired by David Roche, is now 16-strong and includes writers, experts from the publishing industry, capital development and business.

Chair of the Board, David Roche, said: 'These wonderful new trustee appointments to the New Writing North board are part of the ongoing powering up of the organisation to enhance our capability and to broaden our representation and skills for the future. It has been a difficult year for everyone, and NWN has demonstrated resilience, adaptability and innovation to deliver its 2020 goals and drive forward with our plans for a centre for writing and publishing in Newcastle. Far from retreating, we and our partners are certain that major initiatives such as this that encourage and boost the spirit of community, city centre regeneration, and promote creativity are more critical than ever.'

Yvonne Battle-Felton is an American writer living in the UK. Her novel *Remembered* was longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction (2019) and shortlisted for the Jhalak Prize (2020). She is a 2019 British Library Eccles Centre Visiting Fellow, and Lecturer in Creative Writing and Creative Industries at Sheffield Hallam University.

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On joining the board, Yvonne Battle-Felton said: 'I'm a trustee for New Writing North because I want to be a part of helping them continue to reach their goals of developing new voices, supporting writers of any stage, and shattering barriers.'

Born in Germany, educated in Japan and the United Kingdom, **Naana Orleans-Amisah** has an unwavering Ghanaian identity. Her professional career spans two decades as a brand, communications and creative strategist, working with companies and brands as diverse as glue, JWT, Karmarama, Dove, Hilton, O2, the Army, Jaguar, and Crabtree & Evelyn. Naana is the founder of her own consultancy, NOA, and a creative mentor to young businesses.

Naana Orleans-Amisah said: 'The chance to join New Writing North, and its ambition to truly represent the imaginative expressions of writers in the North, was irresistible. It is a small agency, whose already strong influence is set to become more impactful as it works to place writing and creativity further within the fabric of the just, fair and equitable community it is helping to build.'

Kim Tserkezie has worked in broadcast media for twenty-five years, with a career spanning comedy, drama and documentary. She has worked many roles within the industry from acting to production and now manages her own production company, Scattered Pictures, based in Newcastle. In 2019, she was named as one of the 100 most influential disabled people in the UK (Shaw Trust Power 100). Kim is a full member of BAFTA and a board member of the Royal Television Society North East and the Borders. She is a member of BFI's Disability Advisory Group.

Kim Tserkezie said: 'As someone born and bred in the North East and passionate about showcasing my home region and its talent, I could not be more proud to have the opportunity to support the amazing New Writing North and its ever evolving brilliant services and commitment to Northern writers.'

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For all media enquiries, please contact Laura Fraine, Senior Marketing & Communications Manager at New Writing North
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About New Writing North

New Writing North is the development agency for creative writing and reading in the North of England, and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. The organisation works in partnership with regional and national partners to produce a range of literary and performance activities including

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flagship projects such as the Northern Writers' Awards, the Gordon Burn Prize, Read Regional, Young Writers and Durham Book Festival.

New Writing North specialises in developing and investing in writers of all ages and act as a dynamic broker between writers, producers, publishers and broadcasters across the creative industries. Partners include BBC Radio 3, Channel 4 Drama, Faber & Faber, Northumbria University and Durham University. As a producer of new work, New Writing North commissions a wide range of writing from topical essays and publications to award-winning dance theatre productions, short films, live literature and broadcast projects. www.newwritingnorth.com

Full bios for new trustees December 2020

For all trustee bios see <https://newwritingnorth.com/about-us/staff-trustees/>

Yvonne Battle-Felton

Yvonne Battle-Felton, author of *Remembered*, is an American writer living in the UK. Her writing has been published in literary journals and anthologies. *Remembered*, was longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction (2019) and shortlisted for the Jhalak Prize (2020). Winner of a Northern Writers Award in fiction (2017), Yvonne was shortlisted for the Words and Women Competition (2017), the Sunderland University Waterstones SunStory Award in 2018, and awarded a Society of Author's Foundation Grant for *Remembered* in 2018. She was commended for children's writing in the Faber Andlyn BAME (FAB) Prize (2017) and has three titles in Penguin Random House's *The Ladybird Tales of Superheroes* and three in *The Ladybird Tales of Crowns and Thrones*. Yvonne has a PhD in Creative Writing from Lancaster University and is a 2019 British Library Eccles Centre Visiting Fellow, and Lecturer in Creative Writing and Creative Industries at Sheffield Hallam University.

Naana Orleans-Amissah

Born in Germany, educated in Japan and the United Kingdom, Naana Orleans-Amissah has an unwavering Ghanaian identity. Her professional career spans two decades as a brand, communications and creative strategist. A graduate of the LSE, she also holds a Financial Times Non-Executive Director's Master's Diploma. She started her career at Unilever.

She has both client and agency experience and has worked on and across four continents for companies and brands as diverse as glue, JWT, Karmarama, Dove, Hilton, O2, the Army, and Jaguar, Crabtree & Evelyn. She has attended the sought-after Google Creative Academy in Palo Alto. Elsewhere she has taught in Ghana at Publicis/Origin8; in the UK for Create Jobs, CreatED and the Bakkavor Board of Trustees; in Richmond, VA, USA for Hilton Hotels; and at EY in London.

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She is the founder of her own consultancy, NOA. Naana strongly believes in the concept of “*Each One, Teach One*” and is a regular mentor. She has gone on to found Forge by NOA - a mentoring experience that guides young businesses and creatives. It provides practical, inspired and challenging Masterclasses and Workshops that unlock, upskill and sustain creative potential.

As a poet, cultural observer and obsessive lover of the arts, Naana is interested in how stories — including personal myths — are formed, told and repurposed; the power they hold as they are repeated — personally and publicly — and how this can nourish or hinder the creative practice.

This is Naana’s first trusteeship at New Writing North. She strongly believes creative, communicative and artistic experience are additive skills that encourage the kind of multiplicity of perspective and robust challenge that make for a healthy, successful board.

Kim Tserkezie

Kim Tserkezie has worked in broadcast media for twenty-five years, with a career spanning comedy, drama and documentary. She has worked many roles within the industry from acting to production. In 2019, she was named as one of the 100 most influential disabled people in the UK (Shaw Trust Power 100). In 2020, she won a Royal Television Society Award for best drama performance for her leading role in *Obsession* (BFI Network).

Kim got her first break as a presenter for BBC's *Disability Today* and *From The Edge*, often writing and producing her own items. From 2002-2005 Kim played Penny Pocket in BAFTA award winning, *Balamory*. This role won Kim an award from Whizz Kidz for representation.

Following *Balamory*, Kim found, frustratingly, she was rarely offered the chance to play ‘*characters*,’ only ‘*medical problems*’ and “*stereotypical portrayals of disability*”. This led Kim to set up her own production company, Scattered Pictures. Since 2013, the company, based in Kim’s home city of Newcastle Upon Tyne, has developed projects which showcase underrepresented, emerging talent. Kim believes “*real change will happen when fair representation exists throughout the whole process on and off screen, from training and writing to directing right through to commissioning*”.

Kim has received drama and comedy writing commissions from BBC, ITV and C4. She is currently writing and producing screen projects with leading production companies including BBC Studios and IMG Productions. Projects in development include a new children’s TV comedy series funded by the British Film Institute (BFI). Scattered

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Pictures recently received its third radio documentary commission for BBC World Service. Kim presented the previous two documentaries which were well received across the globe and chosen as Pick of the Week by the Observer.

Kim is a full member of BAFTA and a board member of the Royal Television Society North East and the Borders. She is a member of BFI's Disability Advisory Group. She has chaired events for BFI including at London Film Festival and for Netflix. She wrote the semi-autobiographical children's book *The Wheelie Wonderful Life of Millie Monroe*.