

Talking Statues Leeds: The Public Writing Competition

Give The Talbot Hound a voice!

In Trevelyan Square, a Talbot Hound stands alongside three others, forming part of a grand stone fountain. The fountain was built for a Victorian castle, lost for decades after the house fell into ruins, before reappearing in a stonemason's yard in the 1990s...



This hound has seen plenty in its time. What it wants is a voice. But what stories does it have to share? Are you the one to tell us?

Write a Monologue!

Monologos means “speaking alone” in Greek, but we all know that people who speak without thinking about their listener can be very dull indeed. Your challenge is to find a ‘voice’ for your statue and to write an engaging monologue in 350 words.

Get under your statue’s skin!

- Look closely and develop a sense of empathy with your sculpture.
- Invite your listener to feel with you: create shifts in tempo and emotion, use different tenses, figures of speech and anecdotes, psychological transitions, sensory details and even sound effects.

Finding your statue’s voice

Write in the first person and adopt the persona of your character:

- What kind of vocabulary will you use - your own or that of another era?
- Your words will be spoken so read them aloud: use their rhythm and your sentence structure to convey emotional charge and urgency.
- Read great monologues for inspiration, for example Hamlet’s 'Alas, Poor Yorick', or watch film monologues, like Morgan Freeman’s in *The Shawshank Redemption*.

How are you going to keep people listening? Structure your monologue!

- How will you introduce yourself? With a greeting, a warning, a question, an order, a riddle? Grab and hold your listener's attention from your very first line.
- Think of your monologue as a story, with you as both narrator and lead: how will you build a sense of development, suspense and atmosphere?
- Your final line is the most important of all: how will you say goodbye and make your exit?

Find out about your statue - Do some background research before you begin

Google around and become an expert on your statue. You're sure to discover interesting facts, anecdotes, jokes or quotes to weave into your monologue.

The Subject: The Talbot Hound Fountain in Trevelyan Square

The fountain was commissioned by Captain Joseph Edwards in the 1850s for the courtyard of his home, Castle Carr, near Halifax. This was a huge mock-medieval castle, complete with banqueting hall, Great Stairway, and stone carved crusaders.

Castle Carr was put up for auction in the 1940s. However, no one would buy it, and it gradually fell into disrepair, before finally being demolished in 1961. Today it stands in ruins. The Talbot Hound fountain vanished during the auction, and was lost for many years - before turning up in a stonemason's yard in the 1990s!



The ruins of Castle Carr today

What's in a name?

A Talbot was a type of white hunting dog, said to have been brought to England by William the Conqueror in the 11th century. It is the ancestor of the modern beagle and bloodhound, and is often found in heraldry.

Go pay the Hound a visit!

Go to Trevelyan Square and visit the Talbot Hound for some further inspiration! The Hound has the following sign placed nearby:



Some points to keep in mind:

- **The audience is not used to speaking to statues!** It's an unexpected experience and so, the piece needs to be engaging from the start.
- **Every word counts!** It's a short word limit, so avoid 'filler'!
- **The project sets out to reach new audiences:** people who like looking at public art and sculptures as well as people who didn't know they did! We hope for wide public appeal.
- **Use the physicality of the statue.** If a statue has a broken nose, you might want to refer to it.
- **Refer to the location and surroundings** of the statue. What's it doing in that place specifically? Does it explore the areas at night when nobody is around?

Have you found your story and your voice? Then get writing!

How to enter:

Submit your monologue (maximum 350 words) with the heading 'Talbot Hound Competition Entry' to **competition@talkingstatues.co.uk** by **Monday 19th September 2016**, along with your date of birth.

Our expert judging panel will be looking for originality, factual accuracy and entertainment value, so keep this in mind when writing!

The winning pieces will be recorded by well-known actors and included as part of Talking Statues, ready to chat later in the autumn. They'll talk for a whole year! Winners will also be invited along to their monologue recording and receive a copy of the final recorded script to keep.



For further information, visit www.talkingstatuesleeds.co.uk/competition

The competition will be open to all young people under 18.

Talking Statues Leeds

If statues could speak, what stories could they tell? Talking Statues Leeds brings iconic statues around the city to life, using actors, writers and mobile technology. Pass a Talking Statue, swipe your phone on a nearby QR code, and...you get a phone call from the Black Prince...or Leeds merchant John Harrison...or a watchful Leeds Owl!

The statues of Leeds will begin talking in June 2016 as part of the Yorkshire Festival. They will remain talking for at least one year - or for as long as the signs remain in place.

Talking Statues Leeds is produced by Sing London in partnership with West Yorkshire Playhouse and Leeds City Council, and was commissioned by the Yorkshire Festival 2016.