

## Talking Statues Bedford: Public Writing Competition

### Give Trevor Huddleston a voice!

Bedford-born Anglican priest Trevor Huddleston became known as Makhalipile ('dauntless one') for his tireless activism against the increasingly draconian apartheid laws in 1940s and 50s South Africa.

He changed the lives of many South Africans through actions great and small, from providing a 14 year-old Hugh Masekela with his first trumpet, to being an early influence of Desmond Tutu.

What does Trevor Huddleston make of his birthplace in 2017? What is he thinking as he stares out onto Silver Street?



Your challenge is to find a 'voice' for the statue of Trevor Huddleston, 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: Trevor Huddleston**

Trevor Huddleston (1913-1998) was an Anglican priest, best known for his anti-apartheid activism in 1940s and 50s South Africa, and for his seminal 1956 book describing these experiences, *Naught for your Comfort*.

Recalled to Britain in 1956, Huddleston became Bishop of Masasi in 1960, and later served as Bishop of Stepney and the Archbishop of the Province of the Indian Ocean. Throughout his life he continued his anti-apartheid work, and as an honorary South African was able to vote in the first democratic elections of 1994.

*"No white person has done more for South Africa than Trevor Huddleston."*  
- Nelson Mandela

### **Go pay Trevor Huddleston a visit!**

Go to Silver Street and visit the statue of Trevor Huddleston for some further inspiration! The following sign is 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 'Trevor Huddleston Competition Entry' to [competition@talkingstatues.co.uk](mailto:competition@talkingstatues.co.uk) by **Sunday 21 May 2017**.

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.talkingstatuesbedford.co.uk/competition](http://www.talkingstatuesbedford.co.uk/competition)

The competition is open to all over the age of 18.

**Talking Statues Bedford**

If statues could talk, what stories would they tell? Arts producers Sing London are working with the Love Bedford Business Improvement District (BID), Bedford's theatres and museums to animate 7 statues across Bedford in spring 2017! Pass a Talking Statue, swipe your phone on a nearby plaque and presto, get a call back from John Bunyan (as voiced by Matt Berry), Big Band leader Glenn Miller (written by Toby Litt) or a 5-metre tall silver face (as voiced by Al Murray)!

The statues of Bedford began talking in April 2017, funded by The Harpur Trust and town centre businesses whilst working in partnership with Bedford Borough Council, The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum, The Place Theatre, LifeBox Theatre Company and Bedford Central Library. They will remain talking for at least one year - or for as long as the signs remain in place.