



Press Release from Bournemouth University

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Bournemouth University media student to publish debut novel

A student from Bournemouth University's (BU) acclaimed Media School has had her first novel accepted for publication, just weeks before graduating from her undergraduate degree.

Jersey-born Celeste Sharp, 22, wrote six chapters of the graphic novel, called *Shock Theory*, as part of her BA (Hons) Communication & Media course. She was encouraged to submit a treatment for the full novel to publisher Insomnia, which has since agreed to publish her work. The book is due for release next year.

A year and a half in the making, *Shock Theory* actually comprises of two books, each containing nine chapters. The first section was written as part of Celeste's dissertation and submitted alongside the rest of her coursework.

Celeste describes the book as "a science fiction novel set in a bleak dystopian future". Eva, the central character, is a young woman with extraordinary powers, able to manipulate nature and technology. Eva lives in oppressive England, where society live in a totalitarian city (Hubris) suspended in the sky, using shock and sedation to control its citizens. The novel follows Eva and several other characters as they unravel the sinister nature of Hubris and decide to overthrow the cruel rein of Dr Shock and the New Order (NO) government.

The backplate reads:

After a horrific tsunami, England is abandoned and forgotten; even by history. Rising from dark times, a single city known as Hubris is suspended in the Sky, providing a new life based on technology and social order. The NO government has put the clocks back to zero and reinvented London as a completely clean slate for a prosperous society and economy... But Hubris wasn't just built on the ruins of London; it was built on shock.

Celeste believes that her course was extremely beneficial in helping her write the book. She said: “The original concept for the novel was inspired by a media society lecture which referenced *The Shock Doctrine* by Naomi Klein. The book also contains a lot of inspiration from science fiction writer William Gibson, who I studied during the course.

“The most beneficial part of my course was learning how to approach publishers and write a synopsis and chapter outline. It helped me pitch my novel confidently and with a professional attitude. When I approached Insomnia they told me I had one of the strongest pitches they have ever seen and I think I owed this to what I learnt during my degree.”

Celeste will graduate with a 2:1 degree during an awards ceremony at the Bournemouth International Centre on 6 November. She will also be presented with the Atlantic Books prize for the best file in the ‘Writing, Editing & Publishing’ unit of her course, collecting £100 in recognition of her achievement.

Helen Cooper, BA (Hons) Communication & Media Course Leader, commented: “The team who deliver this course are all delighted about Celeste’s success. It is very pleasing to see that the inspiration for the novel has come from various different units studied in the three levels of the degree. It is a broad degree but the various elements were designed to fit together and complement one another.

“The first two years provide the underpinning for students to pursue their own individual interests in the third year while drawing on the experience and expertise of a wide range of staff in Media School. Celeste, as a talented student has been able to blossom under the expert guidance of some very dedicated staff.”

Nichola Wilkinson, Creative Director of Insomnia Publications, added: “As a publisher it is fantastic to find universities like BU offering such revolutionary courses. By recognising the literary and artistic importance of the form, honing the students' craft of storytelling, encouraging the development of individual style and providing the business context necessary to succeed in the industry, the University is nurturing the next generation of creators.”

She continued: “The skill, maturity, scope and style shown in Celeste's initial approach, submission and script work are far beyond traditional expectations for a first-time creator. This depth of understanding can only reflect well on the quality of delivery on this pioneering course.”

Reflecting on her BU experience, Celeste said: “I have had an amazing time at BU and I really don’t want to leave. My course definitely helped me decide what career I wanted to pursue and gave me the skills to achieve my goals. I am thankful for the support I received from many members of staff – all of whom helped me get published”.

For more information on Insomnia Publications please see

www.insomniapublications.com.

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