

**Ledbury Poetry Festival 2017:
The UK's biggest poetry festival celebrates its 21st anniversary
by taking a dazzling programme of events to the streets**

30 June – 9 July 2017
www.poetry-festival.co.uk

'A rare and genuine joining of place, poetry and people' Carol Ann Duffy



In 2017, Ledbury Poetry Festival, the UK's original, biggest and much-loved poetry festival, will present a truly dazzling programme of events to celebrate its twenty first year.

Ledbury, the picturesque and historic market town close to the Malvern Hills, has long been the perfect location for the Festival's eclectic programme which presents poetry through different art forms. The 2017 Ledbury Poetry Festival will welcome a broad range of speakers to share their love of poetry including: Eastenders actor **Ann Mitchell**, award-winning actor and Festival patron **Juliet Stevenson**, as well as poets such as 2016 Forward Prize winner **Vahni Capildeo**, **Denise Riley**, **Helen Mort**, **John Hegley**, **Inua Ellams**, **Kayo Chingonyi**, poet and stand up comic, **Sean Hughes** and the Festival's 2017 Poet in Residence **Fiona Sampson**.

To celebrate 21 years the Ledbury Poetry Festival will also explode like a party popper onto the streets of Ledbury with an ambitious programme of outdoor events and happenings, for all ages. Events will include Outdoor Magic, a largescale community project that will create artwork to wrap the town in poetry and a marathon Poetry As Protest reading. Ledbury's very own William Langland will be celebrated in an outdoor reimagining of his epic medieval poem *Piers Plowman* led by **Tom Chivers** and Penned in the Margins. The festival will also present a series of multilingual poetry performances titled Seven Airs, which will crescendo in a large scale outdoor event, created by Feral Theatre.

The Festival already has a strong international line-up with American poets **Tony Hoagland** and **Thomas Lynch** and the festival will host its first Translation Slam in collaboration with **Sasha Dugdale** and Modern Poetry in Translation. For the third year **Versopolis** will continue to celebrate the best emerging European poets in an event that has become a Festival highlight.

Chloe Garner, Ledbury Poetry Festival's Artistic Director says, "21 years of Ledbury Poetry Festival is an amazing achievement and we want to ensure that nobody misses out – so the Festival will take to the streets on a scale never seen before. Every year we bring together world class poets to perform, teach and talk about poetry. Poetry is taken off the page using music, art, theatre, film and dance. If you think you know what poetry is, come to Ledbury and let Ledbury Poetry Festival surprise you."

With many more events and names to be announced in the new year, 2017 will further cement Ledbury Poetry Festival's status as the biggest and most loved poetry festival in the UK and a right of passage for poets, poetry lovers and festival goers alike.

For media enquiries about Ledbury Poetry Festival please contact Becky Fincham at Bigmouth Book Events & PR on becky@bigmouthpresents.com / 07545 760590. Or Phillippa Slinger, Festival Manager on manager@poetry-festival.co.uk, 01531 634156