

Ledbury Poetry Festival Programme

LEDBURY POETRY FESTIVAL 2-11 JULY 2021

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This symbol denotes
an in-person event

FRIDAY 2 JULY

**Sally Crabtree Sweetshop of
Words and other activities,
Barrett Browning Institute, 11am – 4pm**

Come and enjoy colourful and interactive installations. What will you choose? Voltaire said that “The most important choice you can make is to be in a good mood” and the Sweetshop of Words aims to help people to do this!



**Festival Launch including a special pre-recorded
reading and conversation with Margaret Atwood
5pm – 5.30pm, Zoom, £5**

Hear **Margaret Atwood** reading and in conversation, hosted by Ledbury Poetry Critic **Stephanie Sy-Quia**, whose debut *Amnion* is forthcoming. Margaret Atwood’s most recent collection, *Dearly*, harnesses the experience of a lifetime into poems that are wry and entertaining. *Dearly* is dedicated to Atwood’s partner, Graeme Gibson, who accompanied her to Ledbury Poetry Festival not long before he died in 2019, after a struggle with dementia. This unique recording will not be made available outside of the launch.

**Valzhyna Mort and Victoria Chang, chair
Neil Astley
6pm – 7pm, Zoom, £5**

After her mother died, poet **Victoria Chang** refused to write elegies. Rather, she distilled her grief during a feverish two weeks by writing scores of poetic obituaries for all she lost in the world. In *Obit*, longlisted for the 2020 National Book Award in Poetry, Chang writes of “the way memory gets up after someone has died and starts walking.” These poems reinvent the form of newspaper obituary

to both name what has died (“civility,” “language,” “the future,” “Mother’s blue dress”) and the cultural impact of death on the living. In her book of letters to the dead, the prize-winning poet **Valzhyna Mort** relearns how to mourn those erased by violent history. With shocking, unforgettable lyric force, Valzhyna Mort’s *Music for the Dead and Resurrected* confronts the legacy of violent death in one family in Belarus. In these letters to the dead, the poet asks: How do we mourn after a century of propaganda? Can private stories challenge the collective power of Soviet and American historical mythology?

**Jorie Graham hosted by Sarah Howe
8pm -9pm, Zoom, £5**

Celebrated American poet **Jorie Graham**, will read from her latest collection *Runaway* and chat about her work with poet Sarah Howe. Graham is the author of numerous collections of poetry, including *PLACE*, which won the Forward Prize for Best Collection and *The Dream of the Unified Field: Selected Poems 1974-1994*, which won the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. ‘For 30 years Jorie Graham has engaged the whole human contraption — intellectual, global, domestic, apocalyptic’ (*New York Times*).

Sarah Howe is a Hong Kong-born British poet, academic and editor. Co-founder, with Sandeep Parmar, of the Ledbury Poetry Critics scheme. Her first collection of poems is *Loop of Jade*.



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SATURDAY 3 JULY

FREE FUN POETRY ACTIVITIES!

Poetry Jukebox – an interactive installation that works just like a jukebox, only with poetry!

Near the Market House, 10.30am – 4pm, Free
Audiences of all ages are invited to look at jars of poetry displayed on illuminated shelves, choose one and listen to the poem. “Mesmerising, tranquil and incredibly powerful”



Insect Safari – presented by Fetch Theatre and Infamous Arts

A fantastical performance that celebrates everything that creeps and crawls, Suitable for ages 5 to 105

Walled Garden, 2pm – 2.45pm, Free

Our storytellers weave a magical spell as they take you out on safari from their amazing bug hotel leading you into a fantastical world of creatures that creep, crawl, fly, flutter and buzz. Incredible stories and facts from across the world burst into life in this stunning touring show with original music, an ingenious set and featuring a host of incredible puppets.



Sally Crabtree Sweetshop of Words and other activities

Barrett Browning Institute, 11am – 4pm, Free

Come and enjoy colourful and interactive installations. What will you choose? Voltaire said that ‘The most important choice you can make is to be in a good mood’ and the Sweetshop of Words aims to help people to do this!



Sally Crabtree Poetry Bingo

6pm – 6.45pm, Barrett Browning Institute, Free

Quirky and charming, Poetry Bingo is just like normal bingo but instead of cards with numbers on, the audience get cards with the titles of poems on. If any of these poems are performed they can tick them off and whoever ticks them all off first is the winner! Some of **Sally Crabtree’s** poems are performance poems – like Dream Shoes with its light up shoes or Dancing Words which has a cartwheel in it. Some are accompanied by music and others are simply wonderful poetry!



One to Ones with Robert Selby

10am – 12noon, Zoom, £20 per half hour session

Develop your writing and receive constructive and detailed feedback through an individual half-hour session with poet Robert Selby.

Robert Selby is a freelance writer and edits King’s College London’s online poetry journal, Wild Court. His recent collection is *The Coming-Down Time* and he co-edited *Mick Imlah: Selected Prose*.

Ley Hunt: Walking Writing Workshop,

led by Rhys Trimble and Joe Kerr

2pm – tbc, location tbc, £5

Track Ley Lines. Seek inspiration in the landscape. Take frequent stops to read and write poems. This Walking Writing Workshop led by poet Rhys Trimble and Joe Kerr offers a unique way to experience the countryside around Ledbury and to mark the centenary of Alfred Watkins’s vision of ancient tracks that criss-cross the British Isles.



Versopolis with Eleni Cay (Slovakia), Volha

Hapeyeva (Belarus), Danae Sioziou (Greece), hosted

by Annie Rutherford, 12 noon – 1pm, Zoom, Free

A fascinating exploration of Europe, as seen by poets from Slovakia, Belarus, and Greece. Each of these poets is highly respected in their own country, garlanded with awards and prizes, and the aim of Versopolis is to bring them to the attention of a wider European audience. Hear them read and chat about life and work as a poet in different European contexts.

Sponsored by Creative Europe

Ledbury Poetry Competition winners

hosted by Liz Berry

2pm – 3pm, Zoom, Free

Hear the nine competition winners across the Child, Young People and Adult categories of the influential 2020 Ledbury Poetry Competition. The three adult winners are **Kim Moore** (UK), **Kizziah Burton** (US) and **Felicity Sheehy** (UK) Will you be reading at this event next year? The deadline for the 2021 Competition, judged by Anthony Anaxagorou, is 15 July, see www.poetry-festival.co.uk for details

SATURDAY 3 JULY

Anthony Anaxagorou and Andrew McMillan, hosted by

Jennifer Lee Tsai, 4pm – 5pm, Zoom, £5

Anthony Anaxagorou is a British-born Cypriot poet, fiction writer, essayist, publisher and poetry educator. His second collection *After the Formalities* (Penned in the Margins) is a Poetry Book Society Recommendation and was shortlisted for the 2019 T.S Eliot Prize. It was also a *Telegraph* and *Guardian* poetry book of the year. ‘*After the Formalities* is a supreme collection. Anaxagorou’s lyrics, mapped over expansive interior and historical landscapes, feels to me as wise and weathered, and it feels to be bringing something totally new to my ear’ (Danez Smith).

After two prize-winning collections which examined the intimacies and intricacies of the physical body, McMillan’s third book, *Pandemonium*, marks a shift: both inward, into the difficult world of mental health, and outwards into the natural and political world. **Andrew McMillan’s** first collection, *physical*, was the first poetry collection to win, alongside many other prizes, the Guardian First Book Award. Hosted by Ledbury Poetry Critic, Jennifer Lee Tsai, a fellow of The Complete Works programme for diversity and innovation, a Contributing Editor to *Ambit*. Jennifer’s debut poetry pamphlet is *Kismet* (ignitionpress, 2019).

Toward: A Masterclass with Carolyn Forché

5.30pm – 7.30pm, Zoom, £5

In this masterclass led by **Carolyn Forché**, which is open to the public, participants will hear a poem read by each poet, and will offer close readings, as well as suggestions for possible revision.

It is hoped that several approaches to editing, expansion and re-structuring will be offered, depending on the various poetics within the group.

Participants are encouraged to submit work that exemplifies current strengths and difficulties, so that comments may be helpful beyond the poem under consideration.

Limited to 10 participants, but all are encouraged to attend as observers, and will be welcome to participate in the Q&A at the end.

Participants must have published a first full-length collection. Please contact director@poetry-festival.co.uk to participate.

THE POET IN THE ATTIC AND THE POET IN THE WORLD: Malika Booker, Kwame Dawes & John Kinsella in dialogue with Jeremy Poynting

8pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

Like all poets, those involved in this dialogue have spent their time “in solitary”, writing and constructing their collections. But they have all also engaged in multiple conversations. **Malika Booker** has long made it her practice (with Malika’s Kitchen) to work both in isolation and collaboratively with public groups and circles of other poets with whom new poems are shared. For the past six years **Kwame Dawes** and **John Kinsella** have been engaged in an almost daily call and response of poems that has produced four books (a fifth is on its way) that link Nebraska and Western Australia in the age of Trump and environmental crisis. As well as performing their own work, each poet will explore the relationship between their private spaces and the manifold points of dialogue with other poets, other books and with more public and political spaces. Malika Booker is the author of *Pepper Seed* and the recent winner of the Forward Prize for best poem. Kwame Dawes is the author of more than 20 collections of poetry (the last, *Nebraska*) and is the recipient of many awards including the Windham/Campbell prize and the PEN award. John Kinsella is the author of over thirty collections of poetry (the last being *Insomnia*). His collaborations with Kwame Dawes include, *Speak from Here to There*, *A New Beginning*, *Tangling with the Epic* and *In the Name of Our Families*. **Jeremy Poynting** is the founder and managing editor of *Peepal Tree Press*.

Supported by Peepal Tree Press



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SUNDAY 4 JULY

ledbury.poetrypin.info is an interactive poetry trail in and around the heritage places of Ledbury. It is live for the months of June and July, welcoming poems from authors of all skills to pin their words to locations across the town. Imagine a "Poetry Pokemon" and you get the idea! So why not join Mr Jelley for a writing and pinning workshop during the Festival, or just add your words 'on the fly' by opening the web page above in the browser of your mobile phone.

Ledbury Interactive Digital Poetry Pin Ambling Workshops,

11am, 1.30pm and 3pm, meet at the Market House, Free

Free Poetry Walking Writing Workshops with **Chris Jelley** to launch Ledbury's first ever live interactive poetry trail. Allow an hour, be prepared for a relaxed leisurely amble writing and pinning your words to place. The workshops are free and open to all, from families to seasoned poets. The trail uses geo-technology so participants require a mobile phone with location capacity. The workshops will be part writing, part pinning so bring your charged phone and a pencil full of words. Booking not required.



For more information see <https://poetrypin.info> and twitter.com/poetrypin

Poetry Breakfast in partnership with Poetry International Festival Rotterdam

10am – 12noon, Zoom, £tbc

TBC

More information will be added when event is confirmed

John Challis workshop: Appearances and Excavations 10am – 12noon, Zoom, £20

For some, the weight of the past is felt the moment they leave their door. For others, it is most acute in the architecture of cities, or felt through our impact upon the land, or visible inside the home, symbolised by the objects collected or inherited. Even the form a poem takes, becomes a layering of histories. This workshop, offers practical exercises alongside close readings to explore and harness tensions created when the past is resurrected within the present moment.

Eric Gregory Award Winners' Event 12noon – 1pm, Zoom, Free

This event is always a great opportunity to hear young talent, with all the passion, risk and excitement that brings. Former judge, Jackie Kay says, "These awards, I know from personal experience, are potentially life-changing. They give writers a huge boost and validation. They tell them that their trials and tribulations have been worth it after all, after the long haul.. An award like this can put self-doubt in the cupboard for a while."

Nikita Gill and Zoë Brigley, hosted by Chloe Garner 2pm – 3pm, Zoom, £5

Zoë Brigley (Thompson) grew up in Caerphilly in the Rhymney Valley of Wales, and is now an Assistant Professor at the Ohio State University in the US. Her three collections with Bloodaxe Books are *The Secret*, *Conquest* and most recently *Hand & Skull*. She also researches violence against women. 'The poems in Zoë Brigley's *Hand & Skull* are strange-making, unsettling, and thrilling in their originality.' (Maggie Smith).

Nikita Gill is a British-Indian writer and poet living in the south of England. With a huge online following, her powerful and relatable poetry reaches new audiences. Her poetry collection, *Wild Embers*, features rewritten fairytale heroines, goddess wisdom, and is an explosion of femininity, empowerment, and personal growth.

SUNDAY 4 JULY

John Challis and Seán Hewitt, hosted by Andrew McMillan

In partnership with The Poetry Book Society
4pm – 5pm, Zoom, £5

Tongues of Fire is a debut collection by **Seán Hewitt**, containing poems of a rare musicality and grace. Concerned with the matter of the world, its physicality, but also attuned to the proximity of each moment, each thing, to the spiritual. There is always the sense of fragility allied with strength, a violence harnessed and unleashed. 'Wild, heartsore, ecstatic poems... *Tongues of Fire* is a beautiful book and Seán Hewitt is an extraordinary writer' (Liz Berry).

John Challis's debut, *The Resurrectionists*, journeys into a buried and sometimes violent landscape to locate the traces of ourselves that remain. Amidst the political disquiet rising from the groundwater, or the unearthing of the class divide at the gravesides of plague victims, the veil between the living and the dead is at its thinnest when a child is born, and something close to hope for the future is resurrected. 'These poems throw a great arc of light out of the city's storeyed past into the present, place, trades, family, vulnerable fatherhood...John Challis shines his words into the workings of the heart and of nature, with all their unpredictable transformations' (Imtiaz Dharker).

Chen Chen and Luke Kennard, host Neil Astley 6pm -7pm, Zoom, £5

In his new collection, **Luke Kennard** recasts Shakespeare's 154 sonnets as a series of anarchic prose poems. Set in the same joyless house party, *Notes on the Sonnets* riddles the Bard with the anxieties of the modern age, bringing Kennard's affectionate critique to subjects as various as love, marriage, God, metaphysics and a sad horse. 'As riddling and enjoyable as the old sonnets on which it riffs' (*The Telegraph*).

Chen Chen was born in 1989 in Xiamen, China, and "grew up" in Massachusetts in the US. *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities* is a ferocious and

tender debut. Chen Chen investigates inherited forms of love and family – the strained relationship between a mother and son, the cost of necessary goodbyes – all from Asian American, immigrant and queer perspectives. 'What unifies the brilliance of *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities* is a voice desperate to believe that within every one of life's sadnesses there is also hope, meaning, and – if we are willing to laugh at ourselves – humor' (Jericho Brown).

Neil Astley founded Bloodaxe Books in 1978. His books include many anthologies, most notably those in the *Staying Alive* series, most recently *Staying Human* (2020).

Fred D'Aguiar and André Naffis-Sahely, host Jackie Kay 8pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

Letters to America is an ambitious collection from Guyanese-British poet, novelist and playwright **Fred D'Aguiar**. The twenty-two poems are full of lived tales and memories - of Britain, the Caribbean and the United States, where D'Aguiar is now Professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles. 'Fred D'Aguiar has written 'a canticle of water', a book for the individual bowed, imperilled, under the wave of history - monarchical and imperial - and crying out for collective action to stop it from consuming further shores' (Ambit).

André Naffis-Sahely's bracingly plain-spoken first collection, *The Promised Land: Poems from Itinerant Life* gathers portraits of promised lands and those who go in search of them: travellers, labourers, dreamers; the hopeful and the dispossessed. This is poetry as reportage, as much an act of memory as of sinuous, clear-eyed vision. As this arresting new poet has remarked elsewhere: "I don't like poems that invent memories; I have enough of my own." André Naffis-Sahely is from Abu Dhabi, but was born in Venice to an Iranian father and an Italian mother.

Jackie Kay is one of Britain's best-known poets, whose collections include *Fiere* and *Bantam* and the Makar, National Poet of Scotland.

MONDAY 5 JULY

Workshop with Martina Evans: Notorious 10am – 12 noon, Zoom, £20

Hitchcock's Bluebeard films are the catalyst for this workshop which explores the transformation of ordinary guilt and desire into vivid dream-like poetry using cinematic techniques.

William Wootten on Walter de la Mare 6pm – 7pm, in-person at the Barrett Browning Institute and live-streamed on Zoom, £5

William Wootten is a poet, critic and journalist. His publications include the critical study *The Alvarez Generation*: Thom Gunn, Geoffrey Hill, Ted Hughes, Sylvia Plath and Peter Porter (2015) and the poetry collection *You Have a Visitor* (2016). He lectures at the University of Bristol.



Billy Collins and Martina Evans, host Jonathan Edwards 8pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

Billy Collins's thirteenth collection, *Whale Day*, and first in four years, contains more fifty-five never-before-published poems that showcase the playfulness, wit, and wisdom that have made him one of our most celebrated and widely read poets. This collection covers many themes and moods, including Collins's insights on the wonders of life and thrill of mortality.

Martina Evans's new collection, *American Mules* ranges across various locations: England, Ireland and America. Humorous and narrative poems explore American cinema and personal and invented experiences, awash with hospitals, cats and shoes. '*Her work is humane and funny, often beautiful, always without sentiment or bitterness*' (The Irish Times).

TUESDAY 6 JULY

Workshop with Phoebe Stuckes 10am – 12noon, Zoom, £20

Friendship poems! Poems about friends! We're going to be looking at what form they take and how they differ (or don't!) from the tradition of romantic love poems, we will be generating new work and reading poems by Danez Smith, Frank O'Hara, Rebecca Perry, Angel Nafis and Joe Dunthorne (among others).

Kim Addonizio and Phoebe Stuckes, host Judith Palmer 8pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

Kim Addonizio is known as one of America's 'most provocative and edgy poets'. Her poetry, as seen in *Wild Nights* (Bloodaxe) is renowned both for its gritty, street-wise narrators and for a wicked sense of wit. With passion, precision and irreverent honesty, her poems explore life's dual nature: good and evil, light and dark, joy and suffering.

Platinum Blonde is **Phoebe Stuckes'** debut collection and we are delighted to celebrate a former Ledbury Poetry Festival Young Poet in Residence. Each poem presents an episode in the up-and-down life of the wise-cracking party girl. On the surface, this is a world of dancefloors and glitter, but beneath these are poems about self-belief, self-image, vulnerability and insecurity, loneliness, trauma and survival.

WEDNESDAY 7 JULY

Ledbury Poetry Festival Community Programme presents Sharing Showcase hosted by Sara Jane Arbury

10am – 12pm, Zoom, Free

Sara-Jane Arbury hosts this event featuring participants and poetry from across the Festival's vibrant Community Programme. From *Segments* to *World of Words*, *Poetry and Pictures* and *Poetry of the Woods* and everything in between, expect a kaleidoscope of words, images, memories and experiences shared in poetry.

Writing and Poetic Process with Kim Addonizio 5pm – 7pm, Zoom, £20

In this session, I'll talk about what I look for in a poem and aim for in my own work. I'll discuss the writing and revision process of one of my own poems, and then we'll turn to reading some other pieces and using them to launch your own in-class writing. If we have time, you'll be able to share what you've just created and get some feedback on how you might develop it further. This will be a fun, informative session to get you thinking and writing, and inspired for more! This workshop is for everyone, no matter your level of writing experience.

Kim Addonizio is the author of a dozen books of poetry and prose. Her most recent poetry collection is *Now We're Getting Somewhere* (W.W. Norton). Her memoir-in-essays, *Bukowski in a Sundress*, was published by Penguin. She has received NEA and Guggenheim Fellowships, Pushcart Prizes in both poetry and the essay, and her poetry has been widely translated and anthologized. *Tell Me* was a National Book Award Finalist in poetry. She lives in Oakland, CA.

<https://www.kimaddonizio.com>

Ledbury Poetry Salon featuring Poets from Zimbabwe and Botswana and an open mic 7.30pm – 9.30pm, Zoom, £5

Headline poets from Zimbabwe and Botswana will kick-off this very special Ledbury Poetry Salon. Please email director@poetry-festival.co.uk to request an open mic slot.

Batsirai E Chigama is a spoken word poet, a short story writer and a socio-political gender activist. *Gather The Children*, her first collection of poems, is 'a reflection on Zimbabwe in the last ten years; chronicling stories of displacement, loss and desperation.' Batsirai's work has been featured in over fifteen anthologies. In 2014, Batsirai came second in the Stanza Poetry Festival Digital Slam ahead of 8 other contestants chosen from all over the world.

With a belief that art is a catalyst for change, **Tinashe Tafirenyika** has disrupted the Zimbabwe Poetry Scene. In 2017 she became the first woman and youngest person to receive a National Arts Merit Award in Spoken Word Poetry. The same year she also received a Bulawayo Arts Award. When not stringing words together Tinashe practises as a Medical Laboratory Scientist in her home town, Bulawayo.

Peggie Shangwa (known as Umind) is a Christian writer, Senior Editor at *Groove Magazine International*, a regular in *Local Magazine*, *The Voice*, singer, speaker, MC and spoken word artist who thrives on word passion and speaks her mind in connection with her spirit, laying down heart issues on any platform. She is also the founder of Page Poetry Alive, a poetry collective.

THURSDAY 8 JULY

Workshop with Ruth Stacey: A Symbolist Dream

2pm – 4pm, Barrett Browning Institute, £20

Using the artwork of Pamela Colman Smith, this workshop will offer prompts to stimulate your ideas and aid you to write drafts of poems that are rich with symbolism and sensory detail.

Ruth Stacey's latest poetry collection, *I, Ursula*, '... conjures a Dantesque lost forest, where foxes and wild children wrestle amid spells and rhymes of oral tradition...' – Fiona Sampson for *Guardian* 4th April 2020. Ruth Stacey is a lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Worcester.

Gillian Clarke and Matthew Francis, host Jonathan Edwards 6pm – 7pm, Zoom, £5

The Mabinogi is the Welsh national epic, a collection of prose tales of war and enchantment, adventure and romance, which have long fascinated readers all over the world. **Matthew Francis's** retelling of the first four stories (the Four Branches of the Mabinogi) is the first to situate it in poetry, and captures the magic and strangeness of this medieval Celtic world: a baby is kidnapped by a monstrous claw, a giant wades across the Irish Sea to do battle, a wizard makes a woman out of flowers, only to find she is less biddable than he expected. Permeating the whole sequence is a delight in the power of the imagination to transform human experience into works of tragedy, comedy and wonder. The timeless and compelling 'word-music' of one of Britain's oldest cultural treasures is captured in this new bilingual edition. The *Gododdin* charts the rise and fall of 363 warriors in the battle of Catraeth, around the year AD 600. The men of the Brittonic kingdom of Gododdin rose to unite the Welsh and the Picts against the Angles, only to meet a devastating fate. Composed by the poet Aneirin, the poem was originally orally transmitted as a sung elegy, passed down for seven centuries before being written down in early Welsh by two medieval scribes. It is composed of one hundred laments to the



named characters who fell, and follows a sophisticated alliterative poetics. Former National Poet of Wales **Gillian Clarke** animates this historical epic with a modern musicality, making it live in the language of today and underscoring that, in a world still beset by the misery of war, Aneirin's lamentation is not done.

Focus on Mexico with Modern Poetry in Translation 8pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

Join Modern Poetry in Translation's editor **Clare Pollard** to celebrate the launch of our summer issue 'If No One Names Us: Focus on Mexico'. Zapotec-Spanish poet Natalia Toledo, whose poems explore Zapotec culture, will perform with her translator Clare Sullivan, and Jeannette Clariond will read from her new collection 'The Goddesses of Water' with translator Samantha Schnee, drawing on the mythology of pre-Hispanic Mexico to lament contemporary femicides.

Jeannette Clariond is a poet and translator who has dedicated much of her professional life to studying the thought and religion of ancient Mexico. Her book 'The Goddesses of Water' translated by Samantha Schnee will be published by Shearsman Books in the UK in August and by World Poetry Books in the US in December.

Samantha Schnee is the founding editor of Words Without Borders. Her most recent translation is of 'The Goddesses of Water' by Jeanette Clariond. This year she joins the jury for the Stephen Spender Prize for poetry in translation.

Natalia Toledo's bilingual poetry (Zapotec-Spanish) has been translated into languages as varied as Nahuatl, Italian, and Punjabi. She serves as Under Secretary of Cultural Diversity and Literacy for Mexico.

Clare Sullivan, professor of Spanish at the University of Louisville, teaches poetry and translation. Her collaborative translations of Natalia Toledo and Enriqueta Lunez have been published by Phoneme Media and Ugly Duckling Presse.

FRIDAY 9 JULY

Workshop with Rosalind Hudis: Alchemy – how to turn science into lyric.

2pm – 4pm,

Barrett Browning Institute, £20

Poetry and Science are often seen as opposed. Yet there is a long history of poets who had, or have, a vocation in science, natural history or medicine (think Keats) and an equally long history of poets taking inspiration from the methods, mess, magic and matter of science in all its disciplines. In this workshop we shall explore, through conversations around selected examples, some of the ways poets meld the language and meaning-making of science into the language and meaning-making of poetry. You will then have an opportunity to choose a short scientific text, tip it into the cauldron of your own memories and meanings, and transform it into the first draft of a lyric poem. All you need is paper and pen. No previous scientific knowledge required!



Young Writers Collective in the Walled Garden (outdoors/bad weather inside)

2pm – 3pm, Free, no booking required

An opportunity to hear and witness a selection of young people's poetry written in supported workshops with practitioner Toni Cook as part of the Festival's Community Programme. Feedback from previous years: "This is important poetry from people who might not ordinarily be showcased", expect raw, direct and beautifully crafted language conveying life as it is.



Angela France and Penelope Shuttle

6pm – 7pm,

In-person at the Barrett Browning Institute £5,
and live-streamed on Zoom, £5

Penelope Shuttle launches her new collection *Lyonesse*. The submerged land of Lyonesse was once part of Cornwall, according to myth and the oral



tradition, standing for a lost paradise in Arthurian legend, but now an emblem of human frailty in the face of climate change. 'Penelope Shuttle, as both thinker and poet, seems to me exemplary in her use of the intuitive faculty' (John Burnside). How do we negotiate a world where capitalism and greed are threatening a fragile earth? where connections through technology can increase isolation? where finding solace in nature reminds us that the seasons can no longer be trusted? The lyrical poems in **Angela France's** new collection *Terminarchy* try to find a way through and look for hope.

Nick Flynn and Eileen Myles (they/them), hosted by Neil Astley and Pamela Robertson-Pearce 8pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

One of the most important and beloved radical icons of American letters, **Eileen Myles** has been described as 'one of the savviest and most restless intellects in contemporary literature' and the 'rock star of modern poetry'. 'New York City's revered queer punk poet' has published twenty books of poetry, art journalism, fiction, plays and libretti. *Serpent's Tail* in the UK publish Eileen Myles's cult classic *Chelsea Girls*, their groundbreaking and candid novel-in-real-time, as well as *I Must Be Living Twice: new and selected poems 1975-2014*.

Nick Flynn has published twelve books, including three memoirs, most famously *Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*, which was made into a film, *Being Flynn*, with Paul Dano playing Flynn, Robert De Niro as his father and Julianne Moore his mother. His five poetry collections are *Some Ether*, *Blind Huber*, *The Captain Asks for a Show of Hands*, *My Feelings* and *I Will Destroy You*.



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SATURDAY 10 JULY

Family Friendly Activities



Spellwright, near the Market House, 10am – 4pm, Free

What would make your life better? Take home a Spell written just for you by fabled bard **Jean Atkin**, and supplied on aged paper in a fine italic hand. You get to press the seal into the red sealing wax yourself. Spells undertaken for brand new babies, for a sister abroad, for invisibility, for making an Owl speak or whatever required.

Poetry Machine, near the Market House, 10am – 4pm, Free

Beth Calverley will fire up her marvellous poetry machine and craft beautiful, intuitive poems on her vintage typewriter. Beth hosts a warm, welcoming conversation with each person, couple or family... within minutes you receive the original typewritten poem to take home with you and remind you of this magical experience.

Sponsored by the English Speaking Union –
Worcestershire Branch

Workshop with Zoë Brigley and Kristian Evans: The Peace of Wild Things? Writing about Creatures



10am – 12 noon, Barrett Browning Institute, £20

Is an animal a person? If an animal could speak, what kind of voice would it have? Can we recapture wonder for creatures that quietly inhabit our everyday lives? What might we learn about ourselves through giving space to animals? In this poetry workshop, we'll read poems about animals, and Zoë will offer some prompts for writing our own odes to the creaturely world.

Rosalind Hudis and Isabel Galleymore 11am – 12 noon, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5



Restorations, by Rosalind Hudis, takes the reader on a journey into what it means to preserve – a monument, a moment, a life-story, a poppy. It's about the hunger to possess and the need to let go. 'If a poem is like a picture, these are history paintings, rich in human detail and many-layered in their brushwork' (Matthew Francis)

Isabel Galleymore's first collection, *Significant Other*, won the John Pollard Foundation International Poetry Prize in 2020 and was shortlisted for the Forward Best First Collection Prize and Seamus Heaney First Collection Prize. Her pamphlet, *Cyanic Pollens*, is based on her residency in the Peruvian Amazon. She lectures at the University of Birmingham.

100 Poems to Save the Earth, with editors Zoë Brigley and Kristian Evans 1pm – 2pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5



Discussion and readings from *100 Poems to Save the Earth*, a landmark anthology presenting a positive and determined impulse to change for the better how human beings interact with the environment. The imaginative, questing poems reveal how we can no longer view Earth as a collection of resources to be exploited but must see it as the living web of connections and relationships that it is. 'This compelling suite of poems is a timely reminder to cherish, to celebrate' (Daljit Nagra).

Kristian Evans writes about ecological philosophies and has worked as an environmental activist for over a decade. **Zoë Brigley** has published three collections of poetry and a nonfiction essay collection.

SATURDAY 10 JULY

Poetry Society Annual Showcase with Susannah Hart, Cheryl Moskowitz and Isabelle Baafi, hosted by Jonathan Edwards 3pm – 4pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), Free but ticketed



The Poetry Society runs some of the most influential competitions and awards in the UK. Come and hear from National Poetry Competition winners, Susannah Hart and Cheryl Moskowitz, and Foyle Young Poet Isabelle Baafi, read and chat with one of the judges, Jonathan Edwards. Find out what makes a winning poem, hear each poet talk about their writing lives and getting published and discover exciting new poetic talents.

Susannah Hart's poems have been widely published in magazines and online, including *Smiths Knoll*, *Magma*, *The North*, *The Rialto* and *Poetry London*. Her debut collection *Out of True* won the Live Canon First Collection Prize in 2018

Isabelle Baafi is a writer and poet from London. Her debut pamphlet, *Ripe*, was the Poetry Book Society's Pamphlet Choice for Spring 2021. Her poems have been published in *The Poetry Review*, *Magma*, *Anthropocene*, and elsewhere. She is a *Ledbury Poetry Critic*.

Cheryl Moskowitz is trained in dramatherapy and psychodynamic counselling began her career with the radical 1980s poetry collective *Angels of Fire*. She has won prizes in the *Bridport* and *Troubadour* competitions and was commended in the 2019 National Poetry Competition. *Maternal Impression* was shortlisted for this year's *Saboteur* awards.



Beth Calverley and Jean Atkin 5pm – 6pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5

Beth Calverley's debut, *Brave Faces & Other Smiles*, takes the umbrella theme of the smile and shares it out – with great generosity and care – among a multiplicity of subjects, moods and meanings. Smiles can be brave, shy, sad, or a lighthouse beam of joy. Some of the smiles that inspired this collection were contributed by people whom Beth has met on her adventures with *The Poetry Machine*.

Jean Atkin's new pamphlet *Fan-Peckled*, features 12 poems inspired by 12 lost words that were gathered into *The Shropshire Word-Book* by Georgina F. Jackson in 1879. Listeners will encounter poems with freckles and red kites, as well as flooding, an abused work horse and a labourer needing to transfer skills in a time of changing economics. 'It is a collection of acute, tender observations' (Margaret Adkins).

Julia Copus on Charlotte Mew 6.30pm – 7.30pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5



For Virginia Woolf and Thomas Hardy, Charlotte Mew (1869- 1928) was the finest woman poet of the era. Drawing on a wealth of previously unseen materials - including letters, photographs, household and medical records, diaries and the testimonies of friends - award winning poet *Julia Copus* animates the myriad factors that went into firing Mew's extraordinary imagination, and in so doing confirms the relevance and power that her work has today.

Ledbury Poetry Slam! 8pm – 10pm (including an interval), Zoom, £5

Join heavenly hosts **Elvis McGonagall** and **Sara-Jane Arbury** for an energetic evening of good verbal virtual vibrations as worldly wordsmiths take the page onto the online stage to compete for points that lead to prizes! In this popular contest, brave bards will share their own poems in their own homes in a bid to reach the hearts and hearing parts of the public. Selected judges award the points, so who will Zoom into the final and become Ledbury's Slam Star? Expect fine online lines, a dash of digital dexterity, and chic shots of living rooms! **To enter the Slam as a competitor, please contact Sara-Jane on 07814 830031 or email sjarbury@gmail.com**
PLEASE NOTE: This event may contain adult language and subject matter.

Poetry Party with Herefordshire Stanza 8pm – 9pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard, FREE



A relaxed and friendly gathering, with plenty of opportunities to mingle and chat. Plus poetic interludes offer a chance to hear poems by the Herefordshire Stanza, and to contribute your own poem, or a poem you love. Drinks available for donations.



This symbol denotes
an in-person event

SUNDAY 11 JULY

Dog Poems! with Matt Black
11am – 12noon (with a 20 minute interval for walks and peeing on lampposts), Market House, £5



Astute observations, speculative imaginings, a peppering of real science, all on the theme of dogs. *Sniffing Lamp-posts by Moonlight*, by Matt Black, is bursting with doggy inspired poetic wonderfulness. Come and worship at the altar of DOG! Dogs welcome! Bring fave doggy poems by yourself or someone else and join in the fun!

Workshop with Jamie Thrasivoulou: Exiting the safe space and moving away from the I Barrett Browning Institute, £20
12.30pm – 2.30pm



This workshop will explore how we can use different perspectives to share personal stories and reflections through our poetry. Award-winning writer, poet, and educator Jamie Thrasivoulou will guide you through this process with a number of exercises grounded by the study of relevant texts and methodologies. This workshop is suitable for both seasoned and inexperienced writers looking for new ways to approach their craft.

Julia Copus and Robert Selby, reading and in conversation with Jonathan Davidson
1pm - 2pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5



Julia Copus returns to Ledbury with a phenomenal new collection, *Girlhood*, her first in seven years. There are autobiographical pieces, poems of history and imagination and, in *The Great Unburned*, there are witches overhead. 'Her technical dexterity and way of seeing the past afresh reap rich dividends' (The Guardian).

Robert Selby's first collection *The Coming-Down Time* 'has a large reach, but makes its themes feel intimate by catching them in language that is at once simple and capable of wonder. It's a striking

achievement: moving and intelligent and memorable' (Andrew Motion).

Jonathan Davidson, Founder and Chief Executive of Writing West Midlands, is a poet, writer and literature activist. His latest poetry collection is *A Commonplace – Apples, Bricks & Other People's Poems*.



Bohdan Piasecki and Rhian Edwards
3pm – 4pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5

Bohdan Piasecki is a poet from Poland based in Birmingham. A committed performer, he has taken his poems from the upstairs room in an Eastbourne pub to the main stage of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, from underground Tokyo clubs to tramways in Paris, from a bookshop in Beijing to an airfield in Germany, from niche podcasts to BBC Radio. Bohdan Piasecki is also a facilitator, host, producer, translator and academic.

The Estate Agent's Daughter is Rhian Edwards' eagerly awaited follow-up to her multi-prizewinning debut *Clueless Dogs*. Her voice is both powerfully personal, local to her Bridgend birthplace, and performative, born to be read aloud. 'Brilliant, visceral poems. Reading them feels like being led through beautiful rooms by an estate agent who always takes care to show you what's hidden beneath the floorboards' (Joe Dunthorne).

One to ones with Robert Selby
3pm – 5pm, Barrett Browning Institute, £20 for a half hour session



Develop your writing and receive constructive and detailed feedback through an individual half-hour session with poet Robert Selby. Robert Selby is a freelance writer and edits King's College London's online poetry journal, *Wild Court*. His recent collection is *The Coming-Down Time* and he co-edited *Mick Imlah: Selected Prose*.

SUNDAY 11 JULY

Ruth Stacey and Jamie Thrasivoulou, reading and in conversation with Jonathan Davidson
5pm- 6pm, St Michael's and All Angels Church Courtyard (outdoors/bad weather inside), £5
I, Ursula is a sumptuous new collection from Ruth Stacey, which 'animates the raw truths of emotional fragility and various forms of haunting through a staggering range of voices and ghostly imaginings' (Carolyn Jess Cooke).

Our Man, by Jamie Thrasivoulou, combines strong imagery, wordplay and a distinct Midlands vernacular – 'by far one of the most exciting, arresting and socially charged voices to emerge from out the current wave of British poetry' (Anthony Anaxagorou).



Juliet Stevenson present Stevie Smith, a film made by Dead Poets Live, followed by a live Q&A, hosted by James Lever
7pm – 9pm, Zoom, £5

Filmed at the candlelit Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, watch Olivier award-winning actress Juliet Stevenson read one of the most original poets of the 20th century, Stevie Smith. Released to mark the 50th anniversary of Smith's death, Juliet Stevenson brings the British poet to life in a new film that draws on her letters and prose, and includes Smith's own illustrations. 'Death, loneliness, God, and the Devil' – is how Stevie Smith described the 'main business' of her life and poetry, and she faced them with the same unsparing, often hilarious honesty. Admired by Seamus Heaney, mistaken for Virginia Woolf and asked out for lunch by Sylvia Plath, her often-underestimated poems were as strange and timeless in the 1930s as they are today



This symbol denotes an in-person event

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Mr Martinez

HOW TO BOOK

The Festival regrets there is no face-to-face Box Office this year

All events can be booked on the website, from 8th June, 2021:

poetry-festival.co.uk