Thursday 3 October | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

Sinéad Gleeson in conversation with Rachel Hewitt

Sinéad Gleeson’s Constellations: Reflections from Life (Picador, 2019) is a debut collection of essays about the body, mortality, grief, motherhood, health, adventure, artists and writers. Her essays have been published in Granta, Winter Papers, Gorse and Banshee. Gleeson’s short stories have appeared in Being Various: New Irish Short Stories (Faber, 2019), Repeal the 8th (Unbound, 2018) and The Broken Spiral (Mutiny Publishing, 2017). Her poetry has featured in various anthologies and she is currently writing a novel.

Rachel Hewitt is a Lecturer in Creative Writing at Newcastle University and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Friday 18 October | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

Patricia Smith

Patricia Smith is the author of eight books of poetry, most recently Incendiary Art (Triquarterly, USA, 2017; Bloodaxe Books, UK, 2019), winner of the 2018 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, the 2017 Los Angeles Times Book Prize, the 2018 NAACP Image Award and finalist for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize. She is a Guggenheim Fellow, a National Endowment for the Arts grant recipient, a finalist for the Neustadt Prize, a two-time winner of the Pushcart Prize and a four-time individual champion of the National Poetry Slam. Smith is Professor of Creative Writing at the College of Staten Island.

At NCLA evening events in 2019/20 we will be collecting monetary donations for the Northumberland Wildlife Trust – a charity helping to restore nature in Northumberland, North Tyneside and Newcastle: www.nwt.org.uk
Ilya Kaminsky in conversation with Sasha Dugdale

*Deaf Republic* (Faber & Faber, 2019), Kaminsky’s second collection, which was shortlisted for the Forward Prize 2019, is a modern parable for our precarious times: in an unnamed country, a deaf child is killed by soldiers dispersing a protest, and the town falls sympathetically deaf in response, coordinating their dissent via sign language. ‘This silence is personal,’ writes Kaminsky. ‘I did not have hearing aids until I was sixteen and my family immigrated. As a deaf child, I experienced my country as a nation without sound. I heard the USSR fall apart with my eyes.’

Kaminsky’s first collection *Dancing In Odessa* (Tupelo Press, 2014) was named Best Poetry Book of the Year by *ForeWord Magazine*. His awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship, Whiting Writers’ Award, American Academy of Arts and Letters Metcalf Award, Lannan Foundation Literary Fellowship and an NEA Literature Fellowship.

Sasha Dugdale is a poet, translator and playwright and was editor of *Modern Poetry in Translation* from 2012 to 2017.

Michael Hughes in conversation with Sinéad Morrissey

Michael Hughes will be reading from, and in conversation about, his second novel *Country* (John Murray, 2018), a retelling of Homer’s *Iliad* set in a lawless border county of post-ceasefire Northern Ireland in 1996. Originally from Armagh, Hughes is an actor under his stage name Michael Colgan. His first novel, *The Countenance Divine* (John Murray, 2016), was lauded as ‘a debut of high ambition’ (*Guardian*) and *Country* has been described as ‘a hard, rigorous and necessary book’ (*Irish Times*).

Sinéad Morrissey is Professor of Creative Writing at Newcastle University and Director of NCLA.
Tuesday 12 November | 7.15pm | Percy Building G.05

**Alistair Elliot: A Celebration**

An event to celebrate the work of the distinguished poet and translator **Alistair Elliot** (1932-2018) and mark the anniversary of his death. Until his retirement he was Head of Special Collections at the Robinson Library at Newcastle University. His final collection, *Great Games* (Shoestring), appeared in 2018. He translated Verlaine, Heine, Euripides and Valéry, among many others.

A selection of Alistair Elliot’s poems will be read by fellow members of the Northern Poetry Workshop, including **Bill Herbert** and **Sean O’Brien**, with reminiscences of this much-loved poet. Come and raise a toast in his memory.

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Thursday 14 November | 7.15pm | King’s Hall

**Booker Prize Foundation & Newcastle University Event: Elmet**

**Fiona Mozley** in conversation with **Rachel Hewitt**

**Fiona Mozley**’s first novel, *Elmet* (John Murray, 2018), was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2017 and the Royal Society of Literature Ondaatje Prize, and won a Somerset Maugham Award and the Polari Prize. Mozley was also shortlisted for the Sunday Times/PDF Young Writer of the Year Award 2018. The *Sunday Times* described *Elmet* as a ‘pastoral idyll, political exposé, cosy family saga and horror tale,’ which ‘reads like a traditional children’s story that turns into a gangster film: *Hansel and Gretel* meets *The Godfather.*’ Mozley is studying for a PhD in Medieval Studies at the University of York and is working on her second novel.

**Rachel Hewitt** is a Lecturer in Creative Writing at Newcastle University and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

This event is the culmination of the Booker Prize Foundation One Book project, designed to encourage students to appreciate and engage with the very best contemporary literary fiction, regardless of their chosen field of study.
Thursday 28 November | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

**Peter Bennet and Keith Hutson introduced by Neil Astley**


**Neil Astley** is the founder and editor of Bloodaxe Books, now in its 41st year, and is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Thursday 5 December | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

**On Adaptation: Hannah Greig and Gwyneth Hughes in conversation with Helen Berry**

**Hannah Greig**, Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History (York), is historical advisor to multiple film, television and theatre productions, including *The Favourite* (2018), which won two Venice International Film Festival awards, ten British Independent Film Awards, and for which Olivia Colman won the Academy Award for Best Actress for her portrayal of Queen Anne.

**Gwyneth Hughes** is a documentary director and screenwriter, whose work includes the 2018 ITV adaptation of William Makepeace Thackeray’s 1848 novel *Vanity Fair*, and *Miss Austen Regrets* (2007), a BBC drama about Jane Austen’s marriage proposal, which won Writers’ Guild and BAFTA awards. Greig and Hughes will discuss how historical adaptation for television requires, in Greig’s words, an ‘engagement with history [that] runs far deeper’ than ‘the stuff of surface detail.’

**Helen Berry** is Professor of British History at Newcastle University.
**Malika Booker and Jo Shapcott**

Malika Booker’s pamphlet, *Breadfruit*, was published by flipped eye in 2007. Her first full-length collection, *Pepper Seed* (Peepal Tree, 2013), was shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney Centre Poetry Prize. She has written extensively for stage and radio and was the first Poet in Residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company. In 2017 ‘Nine Nights’ was shortlisted for the Forward Prize for Best Single Poem. She was awarded an AHRC Doctoral Scholarship at Newcastle University in 2019.

Jo Shapcott has won the National Poetry Competition twice and is the author of seven acclaimed collections from Faber & Faber, including *Electroplating the Baby* (1988), which won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize, *Phrase Book* (1992) and *My Life Asleep* (1998), which won the Forward Poetry Prize. *Of Mutability* (2010) was awarded the overall Costa Book Award. She received the Queen’s Gold Medal for Poetry in 2011.

**NCLA | First Thursdays**

First Thursday readings offer a chance to hear writers connected to the University, or based in the region, and run from 1.05pm to 1.50pm. These events are free and there is no need to book.

**Thursday 7 November | Venue: see www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla**

Ruth McIlroy and Degna Stone

Ruth McIlroy was a winner in the 2017 Poetry Business Book and Pamphlet Competition, and her pamphlet *Guppy Primer* (Smith/Doorstop Books, 2017) was the Poetry Book Society Pamphlet Choice for Winter 2017.

Degna Stone co-founded *Butcher’s Dog* poetry magazine and is a contributing editor at *The Rialto*. She is a Northern Writers’ Award winner, holds an MA in Creative Writing from Newcastle University and is a fellow of The Complete Works 111, a national development programme for advanced BAME poets.
NCLA | First Thursdays

Thursday 5 December | Venue: see www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla

Peter Hebden and Kate Sweeney

Peter Hebden is a writer and researcher currently undertaking a practice-led PhD in the School of English, Newcastle University. His research explores the relationship between contemporary poetry and digital materiality in different modes of electronic publishing.

Kate Sweeney is an artist and researcher producing video, photography and animation. She is interested in video-making as a tool for translation of materials and a platform for exploring collaborative practices. Sweeney is a Creative Writing PhD student at Newcastle University.

Forthcoming 2020 dates for your diary!

Wednesday 13 to Saturday 16 May 2020
Newcastle Poetry Festival

Join us for the 6th annual Newcastle Poetry Festival, when NCLA will be hosting a four-day celebration of the finest poetry from around the world by some of the art’s most acclaimed practitioners. The Festival will include readings, panel discussions, musical performances, workshops, lectures and fine art installations.

Full details to be announced at the Festival launch in March 2020.

Friday 12 to Sunday 14 June 2020
NCLA Nature Writing Festival
The Lost Voices

As a way to interrogate and influence our relationships with a rapidly changing natural world, nature writing has never been so urgent. Through lectures, workshops, readings, performances, film-showings and panel discussions, ‘The Lost Voices’ festival will shine a light onto experiences of the natural world by people whose voices have traditionally gone unheard. These perspectives will challenge assumptions and raise new priorities about the role of literature in shaping human interactions with nature, in the past, present, and future.

The full festival programme will be advertised in the spring/summer NCLA leaflet and online.
Creative Saturdays

Workshops will run from 10am to 4pm, and are held in the Percy Building, Newcastle University. Each workshop fee is £40 full-price and £30 concessions. Full information can be found at: ncl.ac.uk/ncla

19 October

Patricia Smith

Writing Where You Haven't Been

A series of strange, joyous, engaging, restless and somewhat disturbing prompts will generate a series of thematically linked poems.

Patricia Smith is the author of eight books of poetry, most recently Incendiary Art (Triquarterly, USA, 2017; Bloodaxe Books, UK, 2019), winner of the 2018 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, the 2017 Los Angeles Times Book Prize and finalist for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize. Smith is Professor of Creative Writing at the College of Staten Island.

26 October

Gillian Allnutt

Folía/Folio

This workshop will consider the use of theme and variation in poetry, and of repetition and refrain. With pieces of music and poems to take as templates, we will explore these related holding patterns, partly through discussion, mainly through experimenting with them in our own writing.

Gillian Allnutt has published nine collections of poetry including wake (Bloodaxe, 2018). She gained The Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry 2016. She currently holds a Royal Literary Fund Fellowship at the University of York.

16 November

Alex Lockwood

Autobiography as Fiction

Walk the line between fact and fiction in this workshop which explores the exciting genre of autofiction (a term coined by Serge Doubrovsky in 1977 to refer to a hybrid form of fictionalised autobiography) in a supportive and encouraging environment. You’ll leave with a notebook full of ideas and beginnings ready to return to in the future.

Alex Lockwood is the author of The Chernobyl Privileges (Roundfire Books, 2018), shortlisted for the Impress Prize for New Writing, and The Pig in Thin Air (Lantern Books, 2016). He is Senior Lecturer at the University of Sunderland.
Bodies of Evidence: Life-Writing and the Material World

This week of intensive creative practice will explore how auto/biographers might use objects, bodies and places in order to tell stories of human lives, and how life-writing practices can be used to narrate the biographies of objects. Focusing on places, everyday objects and the human body, the course will involve writing exercises, research methods workshops, reading groups, fieldwork, feedback and discussions. The course finishes with a group reading and dinner (included in the course fee: £300/£250 concession). To book a place: www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla

Spring School tutors:

John-Paul Flintoff is a writer, broadcaster and performer. His non-fiction books include Sew Your Own, How to Change the World, The Family Project and, most recently, the novel What if the Queen Should Die? His writing uses objects to tell stories about how we look at the environment, the economy and religion.

Cal Flyn is an author and journalist, whose book Thicker than Water, part-memoir, part-travelogue, explored the legacy of colonialism and violence in Australia. Her second book, Islands of Abandonment (2021), explores the reality of life without human interference, by studying how nature perseveres in abandoned - often barren and hostile - places.

Daisy Hay is a writer of non-fiction, including Young Romantics: the Shelleys, Byron and Other Tangled Lives, and Mr & Mrs Disraeli: A Strange Romance, which shows how private lives influence public roles. Her writings demonstrate a profound interest in how bodies and emotions shape lives and life-writing practice.

Rachel Hewitt is a non-fiction writer, whose books trace how individual lives have been shaped by periods of political and cultural turbulence, including Map of a Nation: A Biography of the Ordnance Survey and A Revolution of Feeling. Her third book, In Her Nature, shines a light on women’s engagements with the natural world while running, climbing and hiking.

Spring School is open to everyone, although those attending should be committed writers. The ideal candidate is an aspiring writer who possesses a serious creative intent to see their work develop, and may already have an ongoing life-writing project. Beginners and writers with more experience are equally welcome.
NCLA welcomes you to its October to December 2019 events and courses programme. Evening events (apart from the Newcastle Poetry Festival in May and the Nature Writing Festival in June) are free to attend but ticketed – please book in advance at www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla and find links here to buy tickets for paid-for events. The running time for events is usually one hour without interval. Please note events may be fully booked – to avoid disappointment do register in advance.

First Thursdays lunchtime readings are free to attend. No need to book!

NCLA creative writing courses Creative Saturdays and Spring School – please book at www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla

For further information about events and courses, including any changes to schedule: www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla
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