Events & Courses
FEBRUARY TO JUNE 2020

Karen Solie
Thursday 6 February | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

Aida Edemariam in conversation with Rachel Hewitt

Aida Edemariam will be reading from, and in conversation about, her debut book, *The Wife’s Tale: A Personal History* (Fourth Estate, 2018), winner of the Royal Society of Literature’s Ondaatje Prize 2019 and Jerwood Award 2014. It recounts the story of modern Ethiopia - a nation that would undergo a tumultuous transformation from feudalism to monarchy to Marxist revolution to democracy - through the life of her remarkable grandmother. Edemariam has worked as a journalist in New York, Toronto and London, where she is currently a senior feature writer and editor for the *Guardian*.

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

Thursday 13 February | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

Lars Iyer in conversation with David Winters

Lars Iyer, author of the *Spurious* trilogy and *Wittgenstein Jr.*, revisits philosophy in his latest novel *Nietzsche and the Burbs* (Melville House, 2019). Iyer’s novel follows a group of students through their last few weeks of school, centering on a charismatic new student from a private school, nicknamed ‘Nietzsche’ for his brilliance and intimations of oncoming madness. Iyer is currently Reader in Creative Writing at Newcastle University, where he was formerly a Lecturer in Philosophy.

David Winters is Assistant Professor in American Literature at Durham University. He has written on literature and philosophy for the *Guardian*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and is the author of *Infinite Fictions* (Zero Books, 2015) and co-editor of *The Digital Critic: Literary Culture Online* (OR Books 2018).
Thursday 27 February | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

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

Two very different northern poets published by Bloodaxe come together for a lively evening of poetry, storytelling, and engaging repartee. *Peter Bennet*, described by the Poetry Book Society as a writer of ‘bold imaginative strokes, subversive connections and dark wit,’ reinvents the world with linguistic resourcefulness and panache in his seventh collection, *Mischief*. Comedy-writer-turned-poet *Keith Hutson’s* debut collection *Baldwin’s Catholic Geese* explores the delight and heartbreak of being human through the lost world of Music Hall and Variety entertainment.

*Neil Astley* is the founder and editor of Bloodaxe Books, now in its 42nd year, and is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Wednesday 4 March | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

**Programme Launch of Fault Lines: Newcastle Poetry Festival 2020 with Charlotte Van den Broeck and Jan Wagner**

To celebrate the Programme Launch of the Newcastle Poetry Festival 2020, we’ll be hearing from two leading European poets, Charlotte Van den Broeck (Belgium) and Jan Wagner (Germany).

*Charlotte Van den Broeck* has published two collections of poetry, *Kameleon* (Arbeiderspers, 2015), which was awarded the Herman de Coninck debut prize for poetry, and *Nachtroer* (Arbeiderspers, 2017), which was nominated for the VSB Poetry Prize 2018, the most important Dutch language poetry prize. These two volumes are combined in *Chameleon | Nachtroer* (Bloodaxe Books, 2020).

*Jan Wagner* is a German poet, literary critic and translator and has published six collections, including *Self-Portrait with a Swarm of Bees* (Arc Publications, 2015), translated by Iain Galbraith and winner of the Popescu European Poetry Translation Prize 2015. Other awards include the Ernst Meister Prize (2005), the Wilhelm Lehmann Prize (2009), the Friedrich Hölderlin Prize (2011) and the Mörike Prize (2015). The NPF 2020 brochure will be available on the night.
Thursday 12 March | 7.15pm | Culture Lab

John McAuliffe and Karen Solie

John McAuliffe’s new book *The Kabul Olympics* will be published by The Gallery Press in April 2020. Described by the PBS as ‘one of the most gifted and versatile poets of his generation,’ his versions of the Bosnian poet Igor Klikovac, *Stockholm Syndrome* (Smith|Doorstop, 2018) was a Poetry Book Society Spring Pamphlet Choice in 2019, and his previous book *The Way In* (Gallery, 2015) won the Michael Hartnett Award in 2016. He is Co-Director of the University of Manchester’s Centre for New Writing.

Karen Solie was born in Moose Jaw and grew up in southwest Saskatchewan, Canada. Her fifth collection of poetry, *The Caiplie Caves* (Picador, 2019), was published in Canada and the UK in 2019, and shortlisted for the T S Eliot Prize. An associate director of the Banff Centre Writing Studio Programme, she has taught writing for universities across Canada and in the UK and is currently a lecturer in the Writing School at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Wednesday 13 to Saturday 16 May

Fault Lines: Newcastle Poetry Festival 2020

The 6th annual Newcastle Poetry Festival will concentrate on climate change and the role of poetry in the climate emergency. We’ll be featuring a wide range of the finest poetry practitioners in performance, conversation, and in cross-genre events involving music, dance and film, as well as working with partners such as the National Trust to commission new works. We’ll also be co-hosting the Northern Poetry Symposium in association with the Poetry Book Society, and announcing the winners of the 2020 Newcastle Poetry Competition.

Full details to be announced at the Festival launch on 4 March 2020 and available thereafter on the NCLA/Newcastle Poetry Festival websites.
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

Newcastle Poetry Competition 2020
Categories: Adult (18+) and Young People (11-17)
Judges: Colette Bryce and Vidyan Ravinthiran

Full information: www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla
Deadline: 3 March 2020
All winners will be invited to read at the Newcastle Poetry Festival 2020.

Thursday 4 June | 6.00pm | Culture Lab
The Final Degree Show 2020: Creative Writing
Join us at this special showcase featuring diverse and exciting new work from students on the Master of Arts creative writing courses at the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, Newcastle University.

The event will be introduced by the MA Degree Programme Director, Professor Jacob Polley.

Thursday 11 June | 7.15pm | Culture Lab
Kwame Dawes

Kwame Dawes is Chancellor’s Professor of English and Glenna Luschei Editor of Prairie Schooner at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. He is the author of twenty-one books of poetry, and author or editor of numerous other books of fiction, criticism, and essays, most recently Nebraska (UNP, 2019), Bivouac (Akashic Books, 2019), and City of Bones: A Testament (Northwestern, 2017). Dawes is Director of the African Poetry Book Fund, Editor of the award-winning African Poetry Book Series, and Artistic Director of the Calabash International Literary Festival. He is Chancellor for the Academy of American Poets, Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and winner of the Windham Campbell Award for Poetry in 2019.
Nature-writing has never been so urgent. Writings about landscape, animals and climate interrogate how humans interact with the natural world, and influence our behaviour. But since its emergence as a genre in the late eighteenth century, nature-writing has arguably been dominated by the voice of the ‘lone, enraptured male’.

The Lost Voices festival will restore prominence to individuals and groups whose representations of the natural world have been over-shadowed by those of the white middle-class male tourist. Through readings, panel discussions, workshops, and lectures, The Lost Voices festival will amplify the voices of women writers, working-class writers, BAME writers; writers about illness, disability, childhood, sexuality and gender; and writers unveiling the historical and contemporary politics of nature-writing. The festival will also launch a new AHRC network, ‘Women In The Hills’, whose events through 2020 and 2021 will explore the factors that hinder and improve women’s access to wild environments.

The festival includes: lecture by Helen Mort; session curated by the Nan Shepherd Prize, featuring three short-listed authors; children’s workshop by Piers Torday (The Last Wild trilogy); and panels and readings featuring, among others, Jessica J. Lee (editor of The Willowherb Review), Ed Douglas (Kinder Scout: The People’s Mountain (2018)), Amanda Thomson (A Scots Dictionary of Nature (2018)), Tim Jackson (Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity), Anita Kerwin-Nye (Director of Engagement, YHA), Lisa Woollett (Rag and Bone, forthcoming), Kerri ní Dochartaigh (The Storm Boy, forthcoming), Richard Smyth (A Sweet Wild Note (2017)), Polly Atkin (Basic Nest Architecture (2017)), Samantha Walton (Everybody Needs Beauty: In Search of a Nature Cure, forthcoming), and Zakiya McKenzie (Writer-in-Residence, Forestry Commission).

Full details will be available on the NCLA website: www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla
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. First Thursdays are free, with no need to book in advance.

**Venue: Barbara Strang Teaching Centre, 1.48**

**Thursday 6 February**

**Tamsin Rees**

Tamsin Rees is a playwright, Associate Artist at Live Theatre, and a Northern Bridge PhD candidate at Newcastle University. She has worked with the Royal Court, Northern Stage, ARC, New Writing North, ‘Bonnie and the Bonnettes,’ and co-founded the theatre company ‘Sticky Theatre’.

**Thursday 5 March**

**Nick On**


**Thursday 7 May**

**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.
Workshops will run from 10am to 4pm, and are held in the Percy Building, Newcastle University. Each workshop is £40 full-price and £30 concession.

**29 February**  
**Catrina McHugh | Writing for Social Change**

This interactive workshop will explore the Open Clasp Theatre Company’s methodology: a democratic and inspiring process designed to challenge inequality and bring about social change. Using lived experiences, case studies and interviews, you will create fresh scripts in fascinating new ways and leave inspired.

**Catrina McHugh** co-founded Open Clasp in 1998, driven by a passionate belief that great theatre can bring about social change. She creates risk-taking, exciting theatre and was awarded an MBE for services to disadvantaged women through theatre in 2017.

**14 March**  
**Margaret Wilkinson | Voice: Your Fingerprint on the Page**

What is voice in prose fiction? Do you have it? Can you find it? Nurture it? Change it? Voice is something native to each writer; it is the tone, style, sound of your prose fiction and is often unconsciously produced. Through various writing exercises, discussions and handouts this workshop will explore how to discover, clarify and enhance the style of writing that makes you unique, so that you will always be able to access it.

**Margaret Wilkinson** has been a senior lecturer on the MA in Creative Writing at Newcastle University for over fourteen years. She writes script for both stage and radio, is a prose writer, mentor and regular contributor to *Mslexia*.

**28 March**  
**Linda France | Spring Unsprung**

Dwelling in nature at a time of climate change, how do we write the tightrope between elegy and ode? In what ways might poetic form create a vessel to carry us across the tides? This is a day for finding the words, where there may have been none before, to sing in an uncertain spring.

**Linda France** has published eight poetry collections; the latest is *Reading the Flowers* (Arc 2016), which follows a tour of the world’s most famous botanic gardens. She has recently completed a PhD at Newcastle on Women, Landscape and Ecology.
Monday 30 March to Friday 3 April 2020

Bodies of Evidence: Life-Writing and the Material World

This week of intensive creative practice will explore how life-writers (including biographers and memoirists) might use objects, bodies and places in order to tell stories of human lives, and how life-writing techniques can be used to narrate the biographies of things. Focusing on places, everyday things, 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 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.

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, explores 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.
NCLA welcomes you to its February to June 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 – please book in advance at www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla and find links here to book for courses and paid-for events. The running time for evening 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 the schedule: www.ncl.ac.uk/ncla
0191 208 7619 | melanie.birch@ncl.ac.uk

Refund Policy In the unlikely event of a paid-for event or course being cancelled, a full refund will be given. If you find you can no longer attend, let us know and we will attempt to re-sell your place once we are fully-booked.

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