



## “My Dear Jack...”: The friendship and correspondence of John Luke and John Hewitt, 1932-1957’

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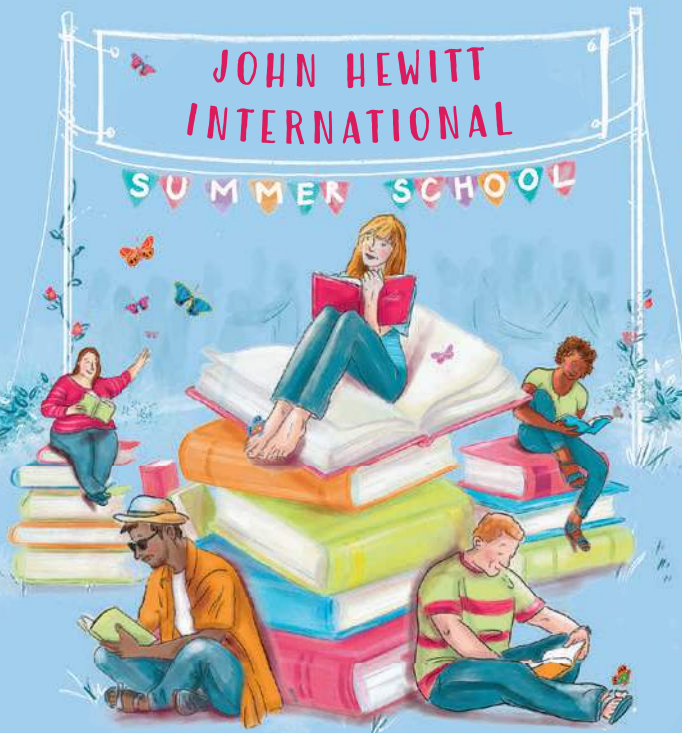
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THE STATE WE'RE IN: BACK TO THE FUTURE

**Monday 24th to Saturday 29th July 2023**

The Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre Armagh



## Foreword

### John Hewitt International Summer School

As one of the most distinguished voices of his generation in Northern Ireland, a prolific poet and writer, cultural critic, social activist, and self-described 'man of the left', John Hewitt left behind a formidable body of work which challenges us to this day. Although much has changed since his time, his contribution feels as urgent, as prescient, as relevant today as it ever was. We have the John Hewitt Society to thank for ensuring that his influence lives on through the annual International Summer School, which honours his memory and his place in our literary heritage. This year's festival, as always, features leading contributors to the worlds of arts, politics and current affairs, engaged in the interrogation of contemporary issues, in keeping with the spirit and ideology of the inspirational figure behind the event. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is proud to be the long-term principal funder of the John Hewitt Society and of this unique festival. Enjoy the programme.



**Roisín McDonough**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Arts Council of Northern Ireland.**

[artscouncil-ni.org](http://artscouncil-ni.org)



# Welcome to the 36th John Hewitt International Summer School.

## Theme: The State We're In: Back to the Future

*A full year since I took this eager city,  
the tolerance that laced its blatant roar...  
...as image of the state hope argued for...*

**An Irishman in Coventry' John Hewitt, (1958)**

Belfast born Hewitt saw his move to the English Midlands less as exile from Ireland, more as realisation of the society he'd 'argued for', the 'future' with all the values he saw as progress; free education, health and welfare; reduced social and financial inequality; greater diversity and mutual tolerance; increasing personal freedom; and strong support for the arts in a city twinned with Dresden, that other survivor of war's worst blitzings, both icons of peace, reconciliation, and progress towards European unity.

*And I grow old  
do not wish to shuffle  
through the rubble of my dreams...*  
**'Exile', John Hewitt (1969)**

That post-war consensus, maintained for decades regardless of party in power, has ground to a halt. With European unity rejected in the UK, media demonization of migrants, healthcare up for grabs, social inequality on the up, personal freedom of choice under threat with the rise of US conservatism and Britain not far behind, rampant inflation, frozen pay for 'us' and vast profits for 'them', and land war raging against in Europe, how do we find a way forward to Hewitt's optimism sixty years back. Can poets, playwrights, artists and activists, by exploring past and present, take us back to that almost-achieved future, that 'state of hope'?

# CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP COURSES

**Monday 24th, Tuesday 25th and Thursday 27th July 2023**

2.45 - 4.45pm daily

£66 – workshop course

**There are six workshop courses on offer:**

- Workshops lasts two hours and run over three days.
- All workshops are at the same time.
- Participants should attend all three workshop sessions.
- Tutors are experienced creative writing facilitators and published authors.

## Creative Writing Workshops



### Paul McVeigh

#### Write Short Stories that Stand Out

In this course you will find out what competition judges and anthology & journal editors look for in a short story. You will get tips on where to start the action and how to grab the reader's attention, as well as opportunities for submission, how to find them and where you should be sending your stories.

**Paul McVeigh** co-founded the London Short Story Festival and has edited three anthologies. His novel, *The Good Son*, won the Polaris First Novel Award and the McCrea Literary Award. His play, *Big Man*, premiered at The Lyric Theatre, Belfast, in association with the 2023 BIAF programme. [paulmcveighwriter.com](http://paulmcveighwriter.com)

## Creative Writing Workshops



### Heather Richardson

#### So, you would like to write a novel?

Have you always wanted to write a novel but aren't sure how to start or how to shape it? Maybe you're already started your novel but have run out of steam halfway through? This series of practical workshops will help you with generating and developing ideas, structuring your novel, doing research. You'll also think about different genres of novel and where your work might fit and look at the different stages of the publishing process.

**Dr Heather Richardson** is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the OU and has published two novels, *Madgeburg* (2010) and *Doubling Thomas* (2017).

*Supported by the Open University.*



### Maureen Boyle

#### Write Your One Wild and Precious Life: Writing a Memoir

Explore ways to access memory using a range of triggers and writing techniques. We will think about the issues that arise in any memoir project: consideration of those whose lives intersect in our stories; how research might help the project; the options we have in terms of form and voice; issues of truth and fictionalisation. In these workshops you may work in prose or poetry. You could be a beginner at writing memoir, or you may be in the midst of writing one.

**Maureen Boyle** is a Mentor/Tutor in Memoir and Poetry and is the award-winning author of three books of poetry, the most recent of which is *The Last Spring of the World* (2023).



### Sue Divin

#### Writing Young Adult Fiction

*The harder I work, the luckier I get."*  
*Samuel Goldwyn.*

What defines Young Adult fiction? How do you write a convincing teenage protagonist? This course will explore key components, including character, voice, plot and dialogue. It will also consider common pitfalls, how to handle sensitive topics, age appropriateness and the importance of inclusion. Expect a mix of discussion, creative writing tasks and top tips.

**Sue Divin** is a Derry-based writer with Armagh roots. Her debut novel, *Guard Your Heart* (2021) was joint Winner of the Irish Novel Fair in 2019 and *Truth to be Told*, her second Young Adult Fiction novel, was published in 2023.

## Creative Writing Workshops



### Siobhán Campbell

#### Poetry Workshop: Finding your Poetic Voice

We are told that we should find our poetic voice but what does that really mean? This course will answer this question by helping you focus on developing your current work-in-progress, including individual poems and thematic links, through reading, discussion, feedback and re-drafting. You will leave with the beginnings of a toolbox of poetic forms and devices to draw upon in the future.

**Dr Siobhán Campbell** has published six collections of poetry, her most recent *Heat Signature*. Awarded the 2012 An Post Book Awards Listowel Irish Poem of the Year, she co-leads the Open University's MA in Creative Writing. [siobhancampbell.com](http://siobhancampbell.com)

*Supported by the Open University.*



### Nessa O'Mahony

#### First Lines – Developing Your Poetry Practice

In this poetry workshop, experienced facilitator and OU tutor, **Nessa O'Mahony**, will teach students the skills need to write a well-crafted poem. She will discuss techniques such as using memory, drawing on imagery and how to deploy rhyme and poetic structure.

**Nessa O'Mahony** has published five books of poetry including *The Hollow Woman on the Island* (2019). She was guest editor of Poetry Ireland, Issue 138, a tribute to Eavan Boland. [nessaomahony.com](http://nessaomahony.com)

*Supported by the Open University.*

# SATURDAY 29th July WORKSHOPS

Creative Writing Workshops - 10.am - 12.pm | £15 each



**Brian Langan**

## The Submissions Game

### *Workshop 1 - Online (Zoom)*

Brian Langan is an author, editor and literary agent with an insider's view of the process of submitting to publishers and agents. This online workshop will deal with how to make your manuscript as good as it can be; maximise your chance of getting it read; write a story pitch letter; and what to do while you wait.

With over twenty years' experience in publishing, **Brian Lanagan** is currently editor of Transworld/ Doubleday Ireland, an imprint of Penguin Random House.



**Sue Divin**

## Make your own Literary luck

### *Workshop 2 - MPT*

Is getting a publishing deal just about pure luck? Can you make your own luck? This workshop is ideal for emerging writers currently working on a novel or hoping to achieve that elusive novel deal.

**Sue Divin** is the Derry-based author of *Guard Your Heart* (shortlisted, Carnegie Medal) and *Truth Be Told* (shortlisted, 2023 An Post Irish Book Awards).



**Judith Greene**

## Mindfulness and Poetry

### *Workshop 3- MPT*

This workshop will explain mindful living concepts and its benefits. It includes a mindful meditation practice with a focus on the special place poetry has to convey mindfulness in a deeper more powerful way.

**Judith Greene** is a member of the Mindfulness Teachers Association of Ireland.



## Opening Address - Bobby Mc Donagh

Time 11.15am | Tickets £10



### **John Hewitt: Identity, Complexity and Language. Reasons for optimism.**

This talk will address four themes in the context of John Hewitt's poetry and legacy: the nature of identity, the beauty of complexity, the power of language and literature, and the many reasons for greater optimism today than when John Hewitt wrote the poem chosen as the theme of this year's JHISS, *An Irishman in Coventry*, in 1958.

**Bobby Mc Donagh** was an Irish diplomat, holding ambassadorial posts including Ireland's Permanent Representative to the EU (2005 to 2009) and Ambassador to the United Kingdom (2009 to 2013), as well as posts at Department of Foreign Affairs headquarters including EU Director General (2001 to 2005) and Deputy Secretary General (2017 to 2018). He served in the cabinets of two European Commissioners and was an official of the European Parliament.

Currently he is a public commentator, mostly on EU issues and British-Irish relations. His publications include *Original Sin in a Brave New World - the Paradox of Europe*, on the Amsterdam Treaty negotiations and the nature of the European Union; and *Irish Friends and Friends of Ireland*, a collection of speeches on British-Irish relations.

Fiction

## Joseph O'Connor

in conversation with...Michael Hughes

Time 1.30pm | Tickets £10



**Joseph O'Connor** is the celebrated author of nine best-selling novels including *Star of the Sea*, *Ghost Light* (Dublin One City One Book novel, 2011) and *Shadowplay* (2019 Irish Book Awards Novel of the Year). His fiction has been translated into forty languages and he received the 2012 Irish PEN Award for outstanding achievement in literature. His latest novel, *My Father's House*, is based on an extraordinary true story of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty who, during his time in Vatican City, rescued victims of the Nazis in Rome, under the nose of his SS officer nemesis. In this powerful literary thriller from a master of historical fiction, O'Connor has created an unforgettable novel of love, faith and sacrifice, and what it means to be truly human in the most extreme circumstances. [josephoconnorauthor.com](http://josephoconnorauthor.com).

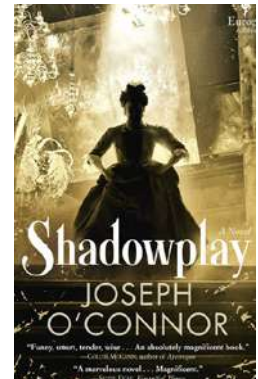
*"A spectacular, thrilling novel...suspense crackles...celebrates triumphant against-the-odds camaraderie."*

Sunday Times

*"A masterwork... so urgent, so incredibly alive... A searing and beautiful example of storytelling's infinite importance."*

Donal Ryan

**Michael Hughes** is a writer, actor and the author of the novels, *Country*, and *The Countenance Divine*.



Fiction

## Billy O'Callaghan

in conversation with...Paul Mc Veigh

Time 7.00pm | Tickets £10



*"Billy O'Callaghan is amongst the finest storytellers and wordsmiths in Ireland today."*

Anne Griffin



**Paul McVeigh** is the acclaimed author of the novel, *The Good Son*. He was Co-founder of the London Short Story Festival. [paulmcveighwriter.com](http://paulmcveighwriter.com)

**Billy O'Callaghan** from Cork is the award-winning author of four short story collections and four novels including the internationally acclaimed *My Coney Island Baby* and the COSTA shortlisted book *Life Sentences*. His most recent novel (May, 2023), *The Paper Man*, is a sweeping and unforgettable interwar love story (Pub: Cape,UK).

Based on true events, *The Paper Man* is the story of twentieth-century Europe and love against the odds. It is a story that will take Jack Shine far from Cork and all the way back to Vienna, and towards Matthias Sindelar, known as "*The Paper Man*", one of the most famous footballers in the world in the 1930s.

[billyocallaghan.ie](http://billyocallaghan.ie)

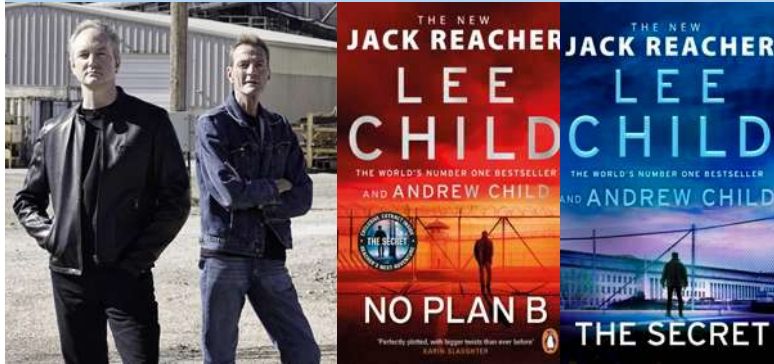
*"Billy O'Callaghan's work is at once subtle and direct, warm and clear-eyed, and never less than beautifully written.... He richly deserves an international reputation. This writer is the real thing."* John Banville

## CRIME FICTION SPECIAL

# Lee Child and Andrew Child

in conversation with...Stuart Neville

Time: 8.30pm | Tickets £14



**Stuart Neville** is a critically acclaimed best-selling crime writer whose Jack Lemon and DCI Serena Flanagan series have won him many awards. [stuartneville.com](http://stuartneville.com).

The annual highlight of the JHISS, multi award-winning Armagh writer **Stuart Neville** invites two of the most popular and critically acclaimed international crime writers to join him for this JHISS Crime Fiction Special.

**Lee Child** is one of the world's leading thriller writers. He is the creator of the iconic *Jack Reacher* Series, a global phenomenon. Having written over 24 Jack Reacher novels and numerous short stories, his books have consistently achieved the number one slot on bestseller lists around the world, with book sales of over one hundred million. Now resident in the USA he grew up in the Midlands, and after an extraordinary writing career he has announced his retirement from writing.

**Andrew Child**, his brother, is a highly successful thriller author in his own right and has taken on the daunting task of continuing the *Jack Reacher Series*. Lee and Andrew have collaborated on three thrillers to date, with the most recent, *No Plan B*, having been described by Karin Slaughter as *"perfectly plotted ... with bigger twists than ever before"*.

*"Lee and Andrew Child nail it again with No Plan B."* Richard Osman

*"It's no wonder Jack Reacher is everyone's favourite rebel hero."* Karin Slaughter.

Talk

## Jon Tonge

Is better possible? The Good Friday Agreement and reconciliation, 25 years on.

Time: 9.45am | Tickets £8



The Good Friday Agreement is rightly admired globally as a successful peace deal which has helped save many lives. Yet its fortune in producing political stability and reconciliation could generously be described as mixed. This talk examines whether instability is inevitable or can be overcome with political imagination. The roles of voters, political parties, the UK and Irish governments and the European Union are examined in terms of both their current approaches and potential to change a lukewarm peace into a more reconciled future.

**Jonathan Tonge** is a Professor of Politics at the University of Liverpool and a well known political commentator. The author or co-author of a dozen books on Northern Irish politics, including *The Democratic Unionist Party: From Protest to Power*; *The Ulster Unionist Party: Country Before Party*; *Sinn Féin and the SDLP: From Alienation to Participation* and *The New Northern Irish Politics*, his next book on the Alliance Party membership is due in the Autumn. Jon has been the Director of the last four Economic and Social Research Council Northern Ireland general election surveys.



## Maureen Boyle and Emma Must read from their work

Time: 11.15am | Tickets £10



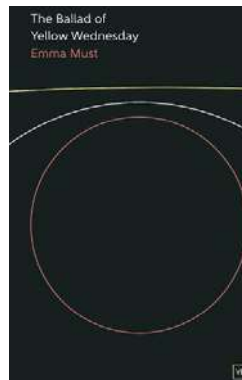
### Maureen Boyle

**Maureen Boyle's** most recent poetry collection, *The Last Spring of the World*, was published in June 2023 by Arlen House, Dublin. She has received various awards including the Ireland Chair of Poetry Prize; the Strokestown International Poetry Prize and the inaugural Ireland Chair of Poetry Travel Bursary. Her most recent award is from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland to research the history of botanical embroidery for an ecological poetry project.



### Emma Must

**Emma Must** was formerly a full-time environmental campaigner whose PhD at Queen's focussed on ecopoetry and ecocriticism. Her debut poetry pamphlet, *Notes on the Use of the Austrian Scythe* (2015), won the Templar Portfolio Award. Her first full-length poetry collection, *The Ballad of Yellow Wednesday*, was published by Valley Press in 2023. Emma's poem *Toll* won the Environmental Defenders Prize in the 2019 Ginkgo Prize for Ecopoetry. [emmamust.com](http://emmamust.com).



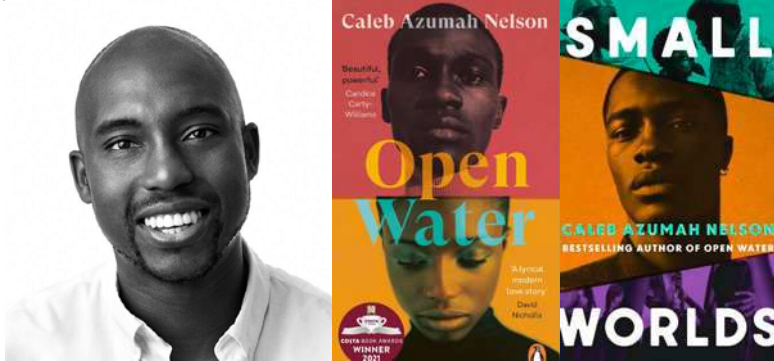
Presented in association with Poetry Ireland. [poetryireland.ie](http://poetryireland.ie)

Fiction

## Caleb Azumah Nelson

in conversation with... Jan Carson.

Time: 1.30pm | Tickets £10



Credit Stuart Simpson



**Jan Carson** is the award winning author of novels *The Fire Starters* and *The Raptures*.  
[jancarson.co.uk](http://jancarson.co.uk)

*"One of the most exciting and original Northern Irish writers of her generation."* Sunday Times

**Caleb Azumah Nelson** is a best-selling British-Ghanaian writer and photographer. His first novel, *Open Water*, won the Costa First Novel Award 2021, Debut of the Year at the British Book Awards and was a No.1 Sunday Times bestseller. It also won a Betty Trask Award and a Somerset Maugham Award, and was shortlisted for the Dylan Thomas Prize, the Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year Award and Waterstones Book of the Year.

His new novel, *Small Worlds*, is set over the course of three summers in Stephen's life, from London to Ghana and back again. It is an exhilarating and expansive novel about the worlds we build for ourselves, the worlds we live, dance and love within.  
[calebazumahnelson.com](http://calebazumahnelson.com).

*"An exhilarating new voice in British fiction."* Vogue

*"Caleb Azumah Nelson's writing is touching, heartfelt, and musically rich."*  
Diana Evans

Panel

## The State of Us!

If Northern Ireland had a mother, she might stop it at the front door and say, “The state of you! You can’t go out looking like that.”

It’s easy to find fault and criticise the Northern Ireland political system. Arguably, politicians have a large role in boosting or diminishing public confidence and trust in the democratic institutions. But the electorate also need to provide challenge and community leadership. So, what might be some solutions? Political blog Slugger O’Toole has assembled a panel who will bring their ideas to the table and pitch potential ways to improve the polity. On the night, we’d love to hear your suggestions too.

Joining host and chair **Alan Meban** around the table are **Megan Fearon**, **Lee Reynolds** and **Jon Tonge**.

*Presented in association with [sluggerotoole.com](http://sluggerotoole.com)*

Time 7pm | Tickets £10



**Megan Fearon**

**Megan Fearon** was a Sinn Féin MLA for Newry and Armagh (2012-2020) and Junior Minister in The Executive Office. She is now a Senior policy & Public Affairs manager at The Open University.



**Lee Reynolds**

**Lee Reynolds** was a special adviser to First minister Arlene Foster, previous DUP’s Director of Policy (2010-2020) and a Belfast City Councillor. He ran the Vote Leave campaign in Northern Ireland in 2016.



**Jon Tonge**

**Jon Tonge** is a Professor of Politics at the University of Liverpool and the author, co-author and editor of numerous books on Northern Ireland politics. As a political commentator, he is the so-called, ‘*Mystic Meg of political forecasting*,’ during elections.



**Alan Meban**

**Alan Meban** is a Belfast-based freelance journalist who blogs about arts and politics. He live-streams civic, academic and political events and produces podcasts and radio programmes. He is a director at FactCheckNI.



## Music

### Jack Warnock in Concert

Time 8.30pm | Tickets £13



**Jack Warnock** is a singer and multi-instrumentalist who has performed as a soloist, accompanist and in groups at events, festivals, and venues across the world. Nominated for the prestigious BBC Radio 2's Young Folk Award in 2018, he received a 'Young Musician's Platform' award from The Arts Council of Northern Ireland and BBC NI in 2023.

A musician in serious demand, Jack's output is testament to his talent and tenacity. His recently released debut album, *Le Solas Faoithine* (By Dusklight), featuring songs in English and Irish, is a masterwork of thought, consideration and beautiful curation and can comfortably sit alongside any traditional Irish debut release of recent times. [facebook.com/jwarnockmusic](https://www.facebook.com/jwarnockmusic)

Eleanor Gaffney will join Jack in concert, playing fiddle and concertina.

## Poetry

### Lifeboat at the Hewitt

with Dane Holt and Sasha White

Time: 10pm | Free | MPT - The 4th Wall Bar



The Lifeboat Press have been publishing poetry in small pamphlets for almost a decade, championing many emerging poets. They recently published Dane Holt's pamphlet, *Many Professional Wrestlers Never Retire*. Sasha White's work has appeared in many publications including Lifeboat's anthology, *Queering the Green* (2021). [lifeboatpress.com](https://www.lifeboatpress.com)

Talk

## Olena Snigyr

Time: 9.45am | Tickets £8



**Olena Snigyr** is a Jean Monnet Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Florence. Her research topic is “Russian strategic narratives of a full-scale war with Ukraine”. Until May 2022, Dr Snigyr was responsible for communication and international cooperation of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance. In her talk she will discuss Russia and its reasons for initiating the war against Ukraine, its goals and the acceptance of this war by Russian society.

She will deal with Ukraine itself, the impact and meaning of this war for Ukrainian society, its historical memory and future challenges and show how this conflict impacts European stability and security.

**Dr Seamus Taggart** will introduce Dr Snigyr. A Political Analyst with the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, based in Donetsk, from 2016 to 2023.

*Sponsored by Linwood Health Foods, Armagh.*

## Poetry

### Gail McConnell & Michael McKimm

read from their work.

Time 11.15am | Tickets £10



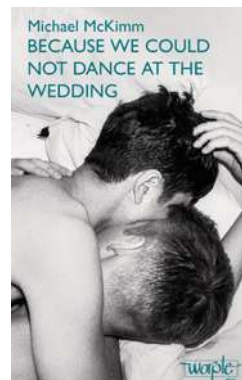
#### Gail McConnell

Gail McConnell's debut collection, *The Sun is Open*, (Pen in the Margins, 2021) about her father's murder by the IRA, won the John Pollard Foundation International Poetry Award and The Christopher Ewart-Biggs Memorial Prize. She has also published two poetry pamphlets, *Fothermother* and *Fourteen*, and has made arts features on her poetry for BBC Radio 4. In 2023, she won the Vilenica Crystal award at the Vilenica International Literary Festival.



#### Michael McKimm

Michael McKimm is a London based poet who grew up on the north Antrim coast. His latest poetry collection is *Because we could not dance at the wedding* (Worple, 2023), following his collections *Still This Need* (Heaventree, 2009) and *Fossil Sunshine* (Worple, 2013). Michael's poetry appears in anthologies including *Queering the Green: Post-2000 Queer Irish Poetry* (Lifeboat Press, 2021). [michaelmckimm.co.uk](http://michaelmckimm.co.uk).



Presented in association with Poetry Ireland. [poetryireland.ie](http://poetryireland.ie)

Fiction

## Denis Mina

in conversation with ...Brian McGilloway.

Time: 1.30pm | Tickets £10



Credit Ollie Grove

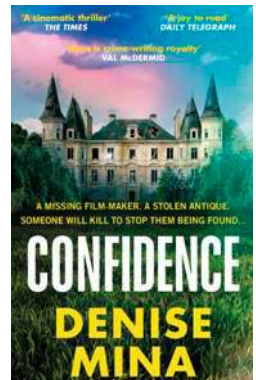


**Denis Mina** is a Scottish crime writer, playwright and comic book writer. A former university tutor in criminology and criminal law, it was during her PhD studies at Strathclyde University that she penned her first novel: *Garnethill* (1998). The prize-winning author of fifteen crime novels, she received the Theakston's Old Peculiar Crime Novel of the Year Award twice. In 2019 she was awarded the MacIlvanny Prize for Scottish Crime for her thriller, *Conviction*, a New York Times Bestseller, while *The Less Dead* was shortlisted for the 2020 Costa Book Awards best novel category. In her latest book, *The Second Murderer*, a smart, atmospheric and witty mystery (published July 2023), she delivers a clever and timely new take on Raymond Chandler's infamous detective, Philip Marlowe. [denisemina.com](http://denisemina.com).

"...one of the most original voices in the notably expanding field of Irish crime fiction." The Irish Independent.

"Denis Mina is crime-writing royalty." Val McDermid

**Brian McGilloway** is the author of the Inspector Benedict Devlin Mysteries and Lucy Black series. His most recent standalone novel, *The Empty Room*, was published in March 2023. [brianmcgilloway.com](http://brianmcgilloway.com).



## Visual Arts Talk

### Joseph McBrinn

"My Dear Jack...": The friendship and correspondence of John Luke and John Hewitt, 1932-1957.

Time: 4pm | Tickets £8



Through their mutual interests and shared beliefs, John Hewitt writer, curator and art critic, and the artist, John Luke, were colleagues, comrades and, at times, inseparable companions. In Hewitt's posthumously published autobiography, *North Light* (c.1961), Luke was the only artist or friend designated an entire chapter. Yet, while Hewitt is widely remembered today, Luke is hardly known at all. This lecture reconsiders this and the impact of Hewitt on Luke's life and art, through a closer review of Hewitt's published art criticism and their unpublished correspondence.

**Dr Joseph McBrinn**, Reader in Art and Design history at the Belfast School of Art, Ulster University, is an art historian who writes about a broad range of art, craft and design history. In 2012 he published a book and curated an exhibition on the life and work of John Luke (1906-1975) for National Museums Northern Ireland.



## Talking About

*Impermanence* is a collection of twelve essays by writers from or living in Northern Ireland, written against a backdrop of Brexit, the Covid pandemic and the centenary of the partition of Ireland.

Joining author and co-editor **Neil Hegarty** around the table will be contributors **Jan Carson, Nandi Jola and Susan McKay**, as they reflect upon the book's themes and suggest ways of looking at our past, present and future.

Time: 7pm | Tickets £10



**Neil Hegarty**

**Neil Hegarty** is an author and journalist from Derry. He has published two novels, *Inch Levels* (2016) and *The Jewel* (2019) and several works of historical non-fiction.



**Jan Carson**

**Jan Carson** is a renowned Belfast writer. Her novels include *Malcolm Orange Disappears*, (2014), *The Fire Starters* (2019) and *The Raptures* (2023). Jan's work has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 & 4.



**Nandi Jola**

**Nandi Jola** came to live in Northern Ireland in 2001. Her debut poetry collection, *Home Is Neither Here Nor There* (Doire Press, 2023), has been translated to Italian and Xhosa.



**Susan McKay**

**Susan McKay** is an award-winning writer and commentator whose most recent book is *Northern Protestants – On Shifting Ground* (2021). She became Ireland's Press Ombudsman in 2023.

Commissioned by the Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, *Impermanence* was edited by Nora Hickey M'Sichili and Neil Hegarty and published by No Alibis Press. It was recently adapted for radio by RTÉ Radio 1 Ireland.

Presented in association with No Alibis Press. [noalibispress.com](http://noalibispress.com).

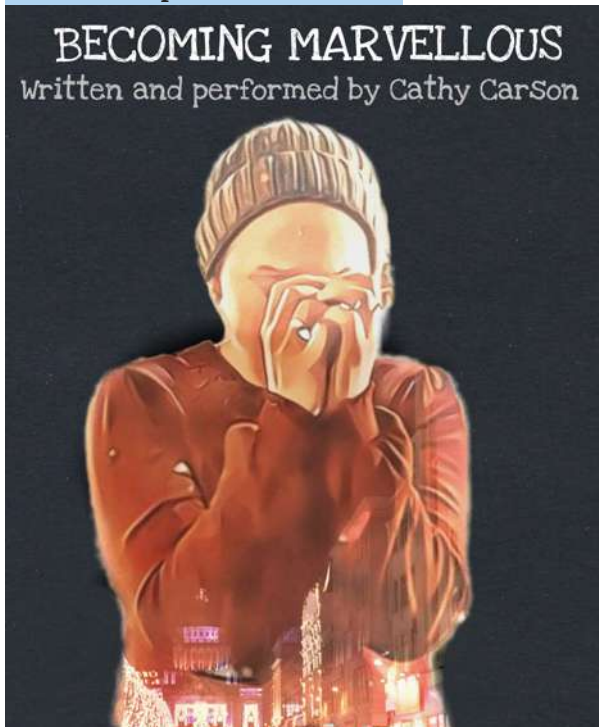


Drama

## Becoming Marvellous

Written and performed by Cathy Carson

Time: 8.30pm | Tickets £12



The story of Danielle is of tears and laughter, of golden moments in a day-long struggle, of rolling with the punches and coming through a winner.

The story begins in Belfast in the 1970's, where life at home is as dangerous for young Danielle as it is on the streets. She feels like she is drowning, but there are lifeboats around her, people who will save her. If only she could trust them enough to take their hands...

*"(Cathy's)...performances are like open-heart surgery where she reaches into your very being and squeezes your heart for every last drop of emotion."* Karen Mooney.

**Cathy Carson** is a writer who combines poetry and storytelling and is known for her powerful and emotive performances. Shortlisted for the Saboteur award for Best Spoken Word Performer in 2023, she has written and performed for festivals, theatre and television.

*Crime Fiction*

## Owen Reidy

Why Northern Ireland would benefit from proper social dialogue.

Time: 9.45am | Tickets £8



Northern Ireland and England are perhaps the two only places in Western Europe where social dialogue does not take place. By this we mean structured negotiations, consultations between government, employers and trade unions as key social partners representing significant interests relating to economic and social policy. Given its history of divisions, its stop start politics one would have thought Northern Ireland is in need of such structured dialogue. This talk will outline why social dialogue is needed, highlight some of the missed opportunities, show what we can learn from elsewhere and how it could contribute to a more stable society and economy for Northern Ireland.

**Owen Reidy** is General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Before taking up this role in October 2022, he was Assistant General Secretary with responsibility for Northern Ireland. With over 24 years' experience in the Irish trade union movement, he started his career with SIPTU in Mayo in 1998. During this time, he represented and organised workers across the Republic of Ireland in the aviation, state and related agency, finance, contract cleaning and security services sectors.

Introduced by **Brian Walker**, President of The Irish Association. [irish-association.org](http://irish-association.org)



**THE IRISH ASSOCIATION**  
for cultural, economic and social relations

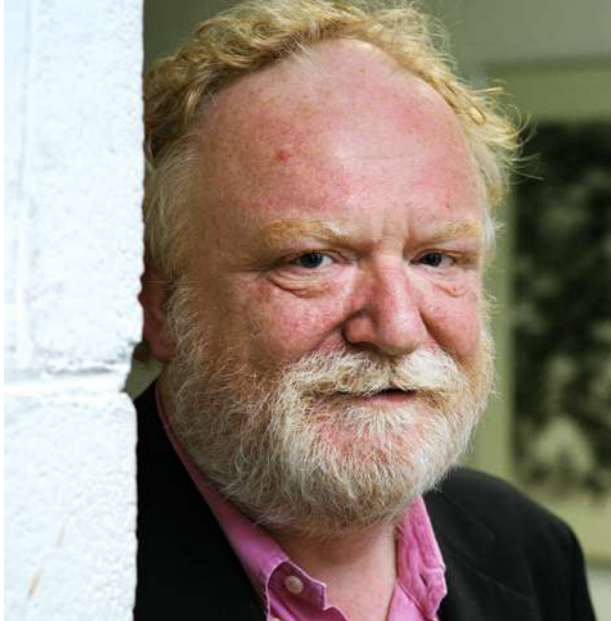
*Presented in association with  
The Irish Association.*



## Frank McGuinness

reads from his work.

Time: 11.15am | Tickets £10



*Credit Dominic Martella*

Frank McGuinness is considered one of Ireland's greatest living writers, and while he is best known as playwright, he started out as a poet and is highly regarded as such.

The Gallery Press has published his seven collections of poetry including *Booterstown* (1994), *The Sea with No Ships* (1999), *The Stone Jug* (2003), *Dulse* (2007), *In A Town of Five Thousand People* (2012) and *The Wedding Breakfast* (2019). His seventh collection, *May Twenty-second* (2022), celebrates and mourns our times, alert to their secrets and their strangeness, their perils and passion, with unforgettable images. [gallerypress.com](http://gallerypress.com).

A member of Aosdána, Frank McGuinness is Professor Emeritus of Creative Writing in UCD which honoured him with the UCD Ulysses Medal in 2019, awarded to individuals whose work has made an outstanding global contribution.

*"[Frank McGuinness] is a fine poet.... an important 'Northern' writer, although his reach extends much wider than that contentious province.... He can be lyrical and strident. He is steeped in his home place, its lore and memory."*

Books Ireland.

Talk

## Frank McGuinness

in conversation with...Aideen Howard.

Time: 1.30pm | Tickets £10

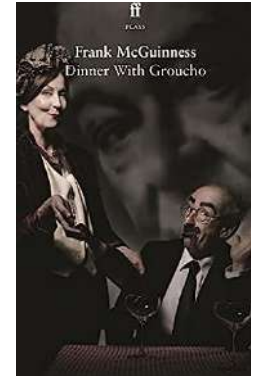
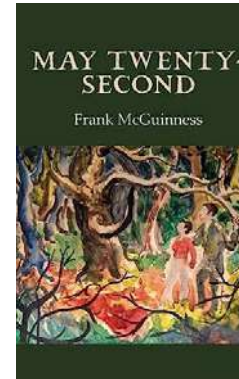
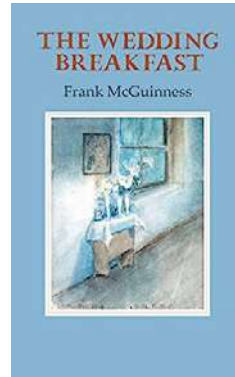


**Aideen Howard**, Director of The Ark Cultural Centre for children in Dublin, has worked for over two decades as an artistic director, producer and commissioner of new work.

**Frank McGuinness** is a globally renowned Irish playwright and regarded as one of Ireland's leading dramatists. His many acclaimed plays include *The Factory Girls*, *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, *There Came a Gypsy Riding* and *Dolly West's Kitchen*. His most recent original play, *Dinner With Groucho*, imagines a fictional dinner date between comedian Groucho Marx and writer T.S. Eliot and premiered at the Belfast International Arts Festival in 2022.

He has adapted plays by Lorca, Chekhov, Brecht, Strindberg, Pirandello and Sophocles, and his version of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* won a 'Tony' award in 1997. Frank's new version of the 17th century classic, *Molière's Tartuffe*, was given an audacious contemporary makeover in a critically acclaimed Abbey Theatre production, before touring Ireland.

His two Novels are *Arimathea* (2013) and *The Woodcutter and His Family* (2017). Frank wrote the screenplay for the film *Dancing at Lughnasa*, adapting the stage play by fellow Ulsterman, Brian Friel.



## Panel

### Women Speaking Out.

Speaking out on this all-women panel are Monica McWilliams, Bronagh Hinds, Fionola Meredith and Bethany Moore, with a discussion on the personal, political, social and economic issues facing Northern Irish women today.

Time: 7pm | Tickets £10



**Monica McWilliams**

**Monica McWilliams** is a co-founder of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, former MLA and a Good Friday Agreement signatory. A former NI Human Rights Commission Chief Commissioner, she now serves on the Independent Reporting Commission for the disbandment of paramilitary organisations. An Emeritus Professor at Ulster University, her memoir, *Stand Up, Speak Out: My life working for women's rights, peace and equality in Northern Ireland* (BlackStaff) is now published.



**Bronagh Hinds**

**Bronagh Hinds** founded DemocraShe in 2000. A co-founder of the NI Women's Coalition, she was a negotiator with Good Friday Agreement, a former Equality Commission for N Ireland Deputy Commissioner and served as a senior advisor supporting women in UN-led Syrian negotiations. She has assisted governments, the EU, UN and NATO with fulfilling peace and security commitments for women.



**Fionola Meredith**

**Fionola Meredith** is a writer, broadcaster and commentator, based in Belfast. An established contributor to *The Irish Times* and *BBC NI*, she writes a weekly Belfast Telegraph column. Her debut novel, *The Stamp of Beauty*, was published by Dalzell Press in January.



**Bethany Moore**

**Bethany Moore** is a feminist activist from Derry-Londonderry. She works for Foyle Women's Information Network, is a newly appointed Trustee of HERe NI, and is an avid member of Alliance for Choice Derry.

PERFORMANCE

## Fishamble Theatre Company *presents* – KING.

Written & Performed by Pat Kinevane.

Time: 8.30pm | Tickets £15



**KING** tells the story of Luther, a man from Cork named in honour of his Granny Bee Baw's hero, Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Luther only leaves his apartment for essential journeys, and to perform as an Elvis impersonator. The play explores prejudice, privilege, and isolation, as Luther struggles to live life to the full.

Fishamble and Pat Kinevane have previously collaborated on five award-winning solo plays, two of which, *Silent* and *Before*, have performed to very appreciative festival audiences in the Market Place Theatre. His performances have won major international awards including Olivier, Herald Archangel, and Adelaide Fringe, and have been called "brilliant" (Irish Times), "extraordinary" (New York Times) and "mesmerising" (Sydney Morning Herald).

*"...incredibly compelling and poignant narrative,"* Irish Times.

*"...the stagecraft [is] unsurpassed...immaculate."* Sunday Independent.

Directed by Jim Culleton, with music by Denis Clohessy,  
a Fishamble production [fishamble.com](http://fishamble.com)

Duration: 75 mins. No interval. Age restriction: 14+.

Talk

## Connal Parr

'Irish, British, Left: the Progressive Bookmen of Northern Ireland Revisited.'

Time: 9.45am | Tickets £8



In Northern Ireland's culture from the 1930s to the 1960s, writers identifying as Irish involved themselves in British institutions including the Left Book Club and Workers' Educational Association – reflecting multiple identities characterizing a particular Protestant identity. The Ulster milieu of the 'Progressive bookmen' was a considerable environment, going beyond the views of a stilted and bigoted provincial atmosphere. Louis MacNeice (1907–1963) was the best known internationally, while John Boyd (1912–2002), W.R. Rodgers (1909–1969), and John Hewitt (1907–1987) were established cultural figures in the Ulster locale.

All were versed in Left wing thought and opponents of the Unionist establishment, which they challenged in writing and in the corridors of various establishments. While Northern Ireland's predicament eventually submerges the Progressive Bookmen, this talk reminds us of this group's complicated identity, and its rich, progressive, and overlooked literary heritage.

**Dr Connal Parr** is Assistant Professor in History at Northumbria University. He has written numerous articles for media and academic outlets. His book, *Inventing the Myth: Political Passions and the Ulster Protestant Imagination*, was published in 2017 (OUP). His current research builds on his expertise in Northern Ireland to comparatively explore how states such as South Africa, Spain, Chile and others deal with a divided and violent past.

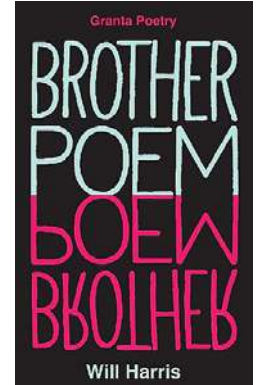
## Will Harris & Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe read from their work.

Time: 11.15am | Tickets £10



### Will Harris

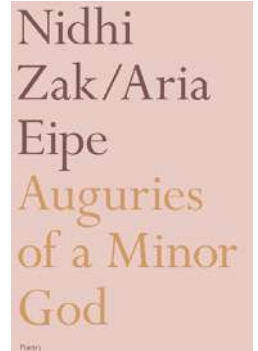
**Will Harris** is a London-based poet. The author of *RENDANG* (2020) and *Brother Poem* (2023), both published by Granta in the UK and by Wesleyan University Press in the US, he has been shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize (2021) and won the 2020 Forward Prize for Best First Collection. Will helps facilitate the Southbank New Poets Collective with Vanessa Kisuule, and co-translated Habib Tengour's *Consolatio* with Delaina Haslam in 2022. He is a Visiting Poetry Fellow at UEA working towards a community-led archive of poets' work. [willjharris.com](http://willjharris.com).



Credit Gillian Hyland

### Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe

**Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe** is a poet, pacifist and fabulist. *Auguries of a Minor God*, her first collection, was published by Faber & Faber in 2021. A finalist for the Dylan Thomas Prize, John Pollard Foundation International Poetry Prize and the Butler Literary Award, it was chosen as a Poetry Book Society Recommendation, National Poetry Day Recommendation, Shakespeare & Co. Year of Reading Selection, and a Book of the Year by both *The Irish Times* and *The Irish Independent*. Nidhi is the 2023 Rooney Writer Fellow in residence at Trinity College Dublin; and guest editor of *Poetry Ireland Review*, forthcoming in Winter 2023. [ariaeipe.com](http://ariaeipe.com).



Fiction

## Sarah Moss

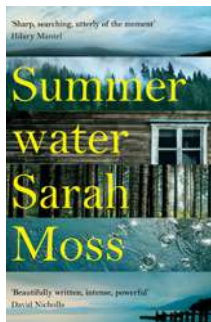
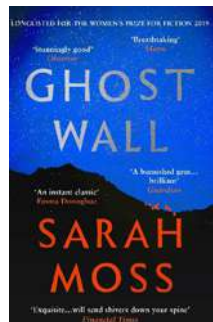
in conversation with...Michael Hughes.

Time: 1.30pm | Tickets £10



Sarah Moss is one of the most critically acclaimed novelists in the UK and Ireland. Her eight novels have won unanimous acclaim and numerous awards. Her 2020 bestselling novel, *Summerwater*, is set on the longest day of the year, where twelve people form a makeshift community in the Scottish Highlands and experience tensions, divisions and tragedy. It is a very modern but timeless story of the human capacity for love and cruelty. Her latest book, *The Fell* (2022), very much a novel of our time, asks probing questions about the place the world has become since March 2020, and the place it was before. This is a story about compassion and kindness and what we must do to survive. In 2020 Sarah moved to Ireland joining University College Dublin as Assistant Professor of Creative Writing.

'One of our very best contemporary novelists.' The Independent.



Michael Hughes is an actor, writer, and the author of *The Countenance Divine* and the award-winning *Country*.



Fiction

## Introducing...Dazzling Debuts Michael Magee and Priscilla Morris

in conversation with Jan Carson.



A unique opportunity to hear two new local writers discuss their debut books with the Belfast writer, **Jan Carson**, author of the critically acclaimed novels, *The Fire Starters* and *The Raptures*.

Doors 2.45pm | Tickets £10



### Michael Magee

**Michael Magee's** visceral debut novel, *Close to Home*, is an extraordinary work of fiction about deciding what kind of a man you want to be and finding your place in the scarred city of Belfast you call home. It is a luminous and devastating portrait of modern masculinity, as shaped by class, trauma, and silence, but also by the courage to love and to survive. According to Martin Doyle in *The Irish Times*, *Close to Home* is "an exceptional debut destined for novel of the year shortlists".



Credit Marion Irwin

### Priscilla Morris

**Priscilla Morris** is the daughter of a Yugoslav mother and a Cornish father and she grew up in London, spending summers in Sarajevo. Her timely and moving debut novel, *Black Butterflies*, shortlisted for the 2023 Women's Prize for Fiction, the RLS Ondaatje Prize and the Authors' Club Best First Novel Award, captures life inside the Siege of Sarajevo through the eyes of Zora, an artist and teacher who is floundering at the midpoint of her life.



## PERFORMANCE

### Flash Fiction Armagh present an Evening of Readings

Curated and hosted by Byddi Lee and Rachel Toner.

Time: 7pm | Tickets £8



Flash Fiction Armagh provides a platform for writers to read and experience immediate audience reaction to their work – a valuable resource for those who sit in a room by themselves writing.

It aims to entertain and build connections between writers and the wider community. Join them for this showcase of readings from local writers. Flash Fiction Armagh is for everyone whether they write, read or prefer to listen.

### Open Mic Night

Abbey Lane Theatre Armagh Special

Time: 9pm | £5.00 (Pay at the door)



Armagh Theatre Group presents An Open Mic Night  
JHISS Special.

...with Poetry, Yarns, Songs & Surprises. All proceeds go to Armagh Theatre Group.

Launch | 5pm

## The Yellow Star Houses of Budapest

Nigel Swann | The Foyer Walls

Monday 24 July | 5pm | Free



From June 1944, Budapest citizens defined as Jews by Hungarian race laws were obliged to wear a yellow star and live under curfew in houses marked with a yellow star. Almost 2,000 such houses were used to incarcerate around 220,000 people before being transferred to the death camps. While 1,600 are still in use, this was largely unknown up until 2014 when the original Yellow Star houses were listed following a government decree. Co Armagh-born photographer Nigel Swann previously documented Budapest's inner city, not knowing this. He has since returned and re-photographed these poignant locations again

## Hell or High Water

Vikkie Patterson | The Gallery

Monday 24 July | 5pm | Free



A Painter and Belfast School of Art PhD researcher, Vikkie Patterson exhibits her new work on repurposed sackcloth created since the beginning of this year. *Hell Or High Water* is an ongoing series of oil paintings on stretched and primed coffee bean sacks which reflects on the upheaval caused by contemporary global events. As with previous works in the series, there remains an element of optimism, and a promise of futurity embedded in these paintings.

*Presented in association with The North South Ministerial Council & The Market Place Theatre.*

# The John Hewitt Community Bursary Scheme

## The Scheme

The JHISS Bursary Scheme is an important part of our Community Education & Outreach programme. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and funders, a number of Full (residential) and Half (non-residential) sponsored bursary awards are available annually to help cover the cost of individual attendances. Feedback from former students tell us without a bursary award they would never be able to experience this unique opportunity that has given them the confidence to pursue their dream of being a writer.

Previous bursary students have gone on to become published writers, lead workshops, host live author events and have been invited to read at literature festivals, work in the arts or come back to volunteer for us. We are delighted to be joined this year by former bursary students Vikkie Patterson, Sue Divin and Nandi Jola.

## What is a Bursary Award?

A bursary award offers financial support to those who otherwise would not be able to attend the Summer School.

A Full Bursary award includes B&B | free tickets to all events | a creative writing workshop of your choice | reception invites. A Half Bursary award is non-residential (no B&B), otherwise the same.

If you are interested in applying next year, follow us on our socials for details of the 2024 bursary scheme in April.

If you are an individual or a company who interested in sponsoring a JHISS Community Bursary Award in 2024, we would be delighted to talk to you. Please do contact us [hello@johnhewittsociety.org](mailto:hello@johnhewittsociety.org).



*...A brilliant experience, the variety of events on the programme was exceptional.  
I was so lucky to receive a full bursary.'*

JHISS 2022: Bursary student.

## With thanks to our Principal Funders



## And to our Festival partner

The Market Place Theatre and Arts Centre Armagh  
Visit [www.visitarmagh.com/marketplacetheatre](http://www.visitarmagh.com/marketplacetheatre) to find out more.



## And to our project funders and sponsors

*Without the generous financial support of those grant organisations, sponsors, and donors alike, our Festival would not be possible – Thank You.*



North South Ministerial Council  
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An Chomhairle Aireachta  
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An Chomhrúnalocht



THE SEAMUS HEANEY  
CENTRE



# Support Our Vision

At the heart of our delivery is an evolving and innovative programme, changing lives through cultural experiences, raising aspirations, creating opportunities for writers and readers and nurturing excellence. The John Hewitt Society is a registered Arts charity and relies upon the support of statutory funders, sponsors, donors, friends, paying audiences and the many loyal supporters who support the JHISS year on year and who all help us to make our vision a reality.

## Donations

If you have the capacity to make a donation of part or all of your ticket value, we would be most grateful. Your donation will help ensure that future generations are as inspired by the JHISS as you are today.

[johnhewittsociety.org/donate](http://johnhewittsociety.org/donate)

## Become a Friend of the John Hewitt Society

We need friends more than ever at this time to help us sustain our work into the future and help underpin the festival's continuing development. To all our existing Friends who support the Society, thank you for your continued generosity. All Friends, who pledge a minimum of £5 a month, can receive a 10% discount on any purchases from No Alibis Bookstore Belfast. To Become our Friend view [johnhewittsociety.org](http://johnhewittsociety.org)



The John Hewitt Society promotes literature, arts, and cultural activities inspired by the ideals and ideas of the Belfast poet, curator, critic and political thinker John Hewitt.

The John Hewitt International Summer School of Literature and the Arts is a landmark event within the cultural calendar hosting local, national and international writers and thinkers from the world of literature, politics, media and the arts. It celebrates the joy of the written and spoken word in all its forms, from poetry to politics, prose to performances, while championing the best in writing. It provides platforms for established and emerging talent to inspire each other and audiences, while encouraging writers and readers to take risks and find joy in writing and literature.

## **Board, Committee & Staff:**

**Chairperson: Tony Kennedy, OBE**

**Vice-Chair: Ryan Cornett**

Alex Catherwood | Cahal Dallat | Dr Frank Ferguson | Anne-Marie Fyfe | Dr Myrtle Hill | Bill Jeffrey | Naomi Leitch | Dr Paul Maddern | Professor Tess Maginness | Paul McAvinchey | Raquel McKee | Martin Tyrrell | Paul Sweeney | Aoife Walsh

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**Communications: Joe Nawaz**

**Graphic Design & Illustration: BethMcComish.com**

**Web design: freshideas.ie**

## **Contact**

**The MAC – Level 3  
10 Exchange Street West  
Belfast. BT1 2NJ**

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**Tel: 028 9032 4522**


**Email: [festival@johnhewittsociety.org](mailto:festival@johnhewittsociety.org)**

For details of all future events please join our mailing list at  
**[www.johnhewittsociety.org](http://www.johnhewittsociety.org)**

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# Tickets & how to buy them

## *Booking online or by phone*

Online: [johnhewittsociety.org](http://johnhewittsociety.org)

Online: [visitarmagh.com /marketplacetheatre](http://visitarmagh.com/marketplacetheatre)

E-mail: [boxoffice@marketplacearmagh.com](mailto:boxoffice@marketplacearmagh.com)

Phone: **03300 561 025**

## *Booking in person*

The Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre,  
Market Street, Armagh.  
BT61 7BW

**Tickets will be accepted either in print, or on your mobile phone.**

## *Ticket Prices* Individual Events – see event listings for individual prices

**Daily Festival Ticket: £45**

**5-b4-5 Weekly Ticket: £45 (Any 5 events over 5 days before 5pm)**

**Weekly Festival Ticket: £225**

**Weekly Festival Ticket with workshop: £285**

**Creative Writing Workshop Course: £66**

**Saturday Workshops: £15**

## *What are the running times?*

Events run for approximately 60 - 75 minutes, unless otherwise stated.  
All Workshops are two hours long.

**The John Hewitt Society reserves the right to change or amend all, or any events.**

## **Refunds**

The festival can only refund money or exchange tickets in the case of a cancelled event/workshop.

## **Latecomers**

Timings for all events are as advertised. Latecomers cannot be guaranteed entry after the event has commenced. The John Hewitt Society reserves the right to refuse admission and not to admit late arrivals.



# Attending the Festival

## Access

Wheelchair users and those who require special assistance should contact the box office in advance so appropriate assistance can be arranged. One carer goes free for every paying guest with a disability, assistance dogs welcome.

**MPT Facilities include | lifts | an infra-red loop system | wheelchairs spaces | disabled toilets**

## How to get to Armagh

**Bus:** Please contact Translink helpline, **028 9066 6630**, for more details.

**Train:** Portadown or Newry are the nearest train stations, followed by a bus or taxi journey to Armagh.

Portadown Train station is 10 miles from Armagh, Newry is 18 miles from Armagh.

## Car Parking

The Market Place Theatre car park is closed. A limited number of disabled car-parking spaces are available at the main door.

To reserve one, contact Box office

**03300 561 025**

**boxoffice@marketplacearmagh.com**



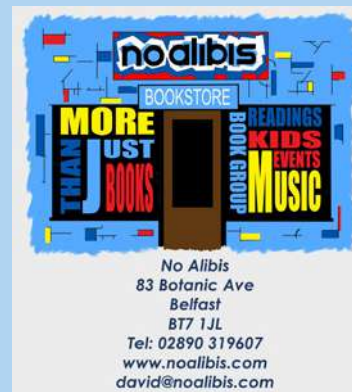
**Armagh City Hotel**

From 23rd – 29th July 2023 inclusive; to coincide with the John Hewitt International Summer School, we have an exclusive accommodation offer.

Single <b>£99</b> B&B	Double/Twin <b>£109</b> B&B	Adjoining <b>£200</b> B&B
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To book call +44 (0)28 3751 8888 option 1 or email [reservations@armaghcityhotel.com](mailto:reservations@armaghcityhotel.com) quoting "JHS2023"  
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# Programme at a glance

[www.johnhewittsociety.org](http://www.johnhewittsociety.org)

24th to 29th  
July 2023



Time	Monday 24th	Tuesday 25th	Wednesday 25th	Thursday 27th	Friday 28th
9.45 am	<b>Official Opening</b> 10:45am	<b>Talk</b> Jon Tonge	<b>Talk</b> Olana Snigyr	<b>Talk</b> Owen Reidy	<b>John Hewitt Talk</b> Connal Parr
11.15 am	<b>Opening Address</b> Bobby McDonagh	<b>Poetry</b> Maureen Boyle Emma Must	<b>Poetry</b> Gail McConnell Michael McKimm	<b>Poetry</b> Frank McGuinness	<b>Poetry</b> Will Harris Nidhi Zak
1.30 pm	<b>Fiction</b> Joseph O' Connor	<b>Fiction</b> Caleb Azumah Nelson	<b>Fiction</b> Denise Mina	<b>Fiction</b> Frank McGuinness	<b>Fiction</b> Sarah Moss
2.45 pm	<b>Creative Writing Workshops</b>	<b>Creative Writing Workshops</b>	<b>Visual Arts Talk</b> Joseph McBrinn - 4pm	<b>Creative Writing Workshops</b>	<b>Introducing...Debuts</b> Michael Magee, Priscilla Morris
5.00 pm	<b>Exhibitions Launch</b> Vikie Patterson, Nigel Swann				<b>Creative Writing Showcase</b> 4 - 5.30pm
7.00 pm	<b>In Conversation ...with</b> Billy O'Callaghan	<b>Panel</b> <i>Sluggie O'Toole</i> Megan Fearon, Lee Reynolds, Jon Tonge, Alan Meban	<b>Talking about ...Impermanence</b> Neil Hegarty, Nandi Jola, Susan McKay	<b>Panel</b> <i>Women Speaking Out</i> Monica McWilliams, Bronagh Hinds, Fionola Meredith, Bethany Moore	<b>Flash Fiction Armagh</b> An evening of Flash Readings
8.30 pm	<b>Crime Fiction Special</b> Lee Child Andrew Child	<b>Music</b> Jack Warnock <i>In Concert</i>	<b>Drama</b> Becoming Marvelous Cathy Carson	<b>Fishamble Theatre</b> KING Pat Kinevane	<b>Open Mic Night</b> 9pm to late Armagh Theatre Group
10.00 pm	<b>Music in the Bar</b>	<b>Lifeboat at the Hewitt</b> with Dane Holt & Sacha White		<b>Music in the Bar</b>	
<b>Saturday Workshops 10am-12pm</b>	<b>The Submissions Game</b> Brian Langan	<b>Mindfulness and Poetry</b> Judith Greene	<b>Make your own literary luck</b> Sue Divin		

