



LYRA

BRISTOL
POETRY
FESTIVAL | 23

CITY OF WORDS

SATURDAY 22ND APRIL -
MONDAY 1ST MAY 2023



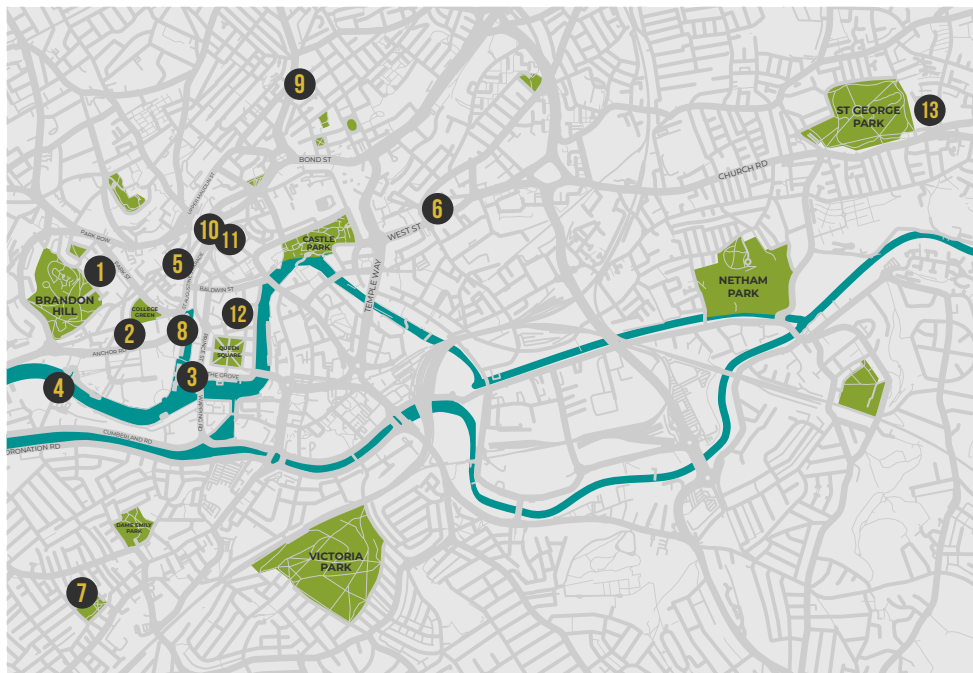
Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

TICKETS **LYRAFEST.COM**

 @LYRAFEST

 @LYRAFEST

VENUES



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 ST. GEORGE'S BRISTOL
Gt. George St, BS1 5RR | 6 WARDROBE THEATRE & THE OLD MARKET ASSEMBLY
25 West St, BS2 0DF | 10 ELECTRICITY HOUSE
West Gate, BS1 4TB |
| 2 BRISTOL CENTRAL LIBRARY
College Green, BS1 5TL | 7 ACTA COMMUNITY THEATRE
Gladstone St, BS3 3AY | 11 BLUEBELL CARE
2 Quay St, BS1 2JL |
| 3 ARNOLFINI
16 Narrow Quay, BS1 4QA | 8 THE WATERSHED
1 Canon's Rd, Bs1 5TX | 12 BRISTOL OLD VIC
King St, BS1 4ED |
| 4 SS GREAT BRITAIN
Gas Ferry Rd, BS1 6TY | 9 HAMILTON HOUSE
80 Stokes Croft, BS1 3QY | 13 THE ORCHARD
Clouds Hill Rd, BS5 7LA |
| 5 BRISTOL BEACON
Trenchard St, BS1 5AR | | |



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

This year's Lyra Festival is the fifth consecutive festival supported by Arts Council England. We are incredibly grateful for their ongoing support of Bristol poetry.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

LYRA²³

CITY OF WORDS

The fifth successive Lyra - Bristol Poetry Festival takes place from April 22nd - May 1st 2023 at over 10 venues across the city. The festival theme, *City of Words*, explores Bristol - its communities, history, physical spaces and future - through the lens of poetry. The theme is also linked to the citywide *Bristol 650 project*, marking 650 years since the 1373 Charter made Bristol a county in its own right. This year is the 60th anniversary of the Bristol Bus Boycott, and our event on Sunday 30th April marks this significant date with an eclectic evening of poetry and music at Bristol Old Vic, headlined by John Agard, performing alongside local Caribbean writers. In addition, 2023 is the 75th anniversary of Windrush, and during the festival John Agard will be doing a special children's reading of *Windrush Child* at the SS Great Britain, in the year of the 180th anniversary of its launch. This iconic ship will also host a family-friendly workshop led by John Hegley. We also have a programme of events at St. George's Bristol in its 200th year.

For the first time ever, we are mounting an exhibition of poetry at Bristol Beacon's Glass Room, with various citywide poems and a wall where the public can post their own poems. We are hosting an event at Bristol Beacon to celebrate the *City of Words* theme, including performances from members of different community groups, as well as current City Poet Kat Lyons and former City Poet Miles Chambers. Other events connected to the theme include a talk by Ros Martin on Bristol's black writers, a poetry film screening of Black British poets and filmmakers, curated by Be Manzini, and an online panel discussion of how cities have been portrayed in poetry, chaired by Madhu Krishnan. This year, we are proud to have collaborated with more community groups and local organisations than ever before.

Our 2023 Festival Poet is Malaika Kegode, a poet, theatremaker (her acclaimed show *Outlier* toured in 2022) and curator, who will engage in community outreach work, host activities, deliver a workshop, perform at St. George's Bristol and judge the annual Lyra Bristol Poetry Slam.

The programme includes readings, performances, workshops, family activities, walking tours, talks, poetry slams, panel discussions, open mics, an audio event and a poetry film screening.

In the month leading up to the festival, we are running numerous community outreach activities, including workshops, reading groups and advice surgeries, information about which can be found on our website.

We believe that poetry is something for everybody to be able to experience, and accessibility, inclusion and representation are at the heart of Lyra Festival. This year, we have an online workshop and panel discussion, as well as numerous live streamed events which can be watched from anywhere in the world. Many of our events are free. As always, 100% of our venues are wheelchair accessible, and specific access information about each venue can be found on our website, where you'll also find a form where you can let us know in advance about any specific access needs that we can help you with.

Lyra Festival is co-directed by Professor Lucy English and Danny Pandolfi. A special thanks to all our key partners, who enrich the festival in so many ways, including Bristol Ideas, Bristol University's Poetry Institute, Bath Spa University, Apples and Snakes, Poetry By Heart, Culture Weston, Visit Bristol, Renaissance One and many more. We hope you enjoy April's programme of poetry at Lyra Festival, and we look forward to seeing everybody, both online and in-person.

FESTIVAL TICKETS & PASSES

Tickets for all activities must be booked in advance, including online and free events.

Festival Passes are available:

LYRA FESTIVAL EVENT PASS £50
 Includes entry to all festival events*

LYRA FESTIVAL EVENT & WORKSHOP PASS £65
 Includes entry to all events AND writing workshops*

*excluding the following events: *The Mum Poet Club*, *Poetry and Biscuits (Workshop)* and *Windrush Child (Family Performance)*. These must be booked separately.

Visit www.lyrafest.com for all tickets and passes.

PRE-FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, 14TH APRIL 2023

PORTRAYING THE CITY

PANEL DISCUSSION

ONLINE ZOOM

Time: 18:00 - 19:00 Price: Free

Poetry has long explored contrasts between the pastoral and the metropolitan, industrialisation and environmentalism. What is poetry's role in portraying or, indeed, critiquing the city? What further possibilities, or perhaps limitations, do poets encounter when they consider the sounds, crowds, nightlife, business, communities, architecture and, indeed, green spaces found in urban areas? Join Samantha Walton, Jason Baskin and Cliff Williamson in this panel discussion, chaired by Madhu Krishnan, as they discuss poems of past and present and consider what it really means to 'write the city'.

This event will be BSL interpreted and live captioned.

Presented in partnership with Bristol Ideas and Bristol Poetry Institute.



SUNDAY, 16TH APRIL 2023



LYRA SLAM QUALIFIERS

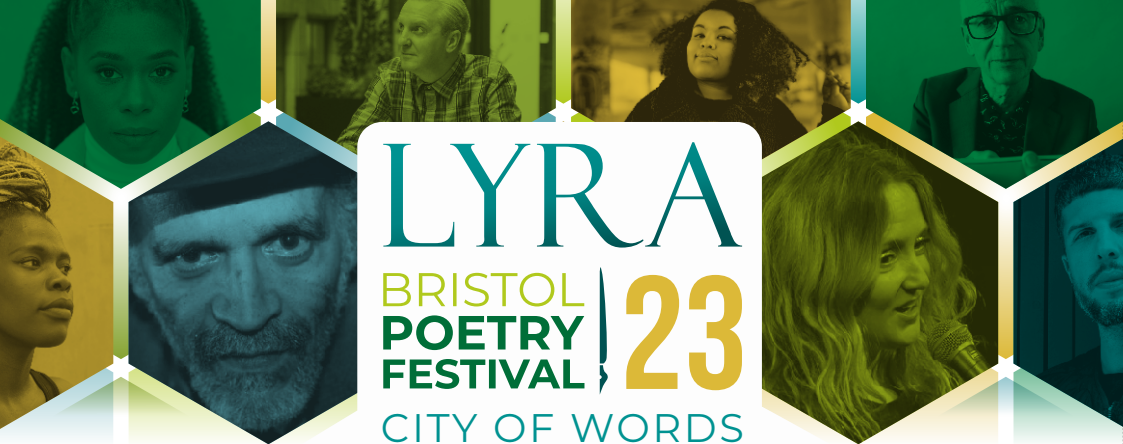
POETRY SLAM

ONLINE ZOOM

Time: 16:00 - 18:00 Price: Free

Join us for this Zoom screening of the 2023 Lyra Slam qualifying rounds, as poets compete for a place in the Grand Slam Finals on Sunday 23rd April at the iconic St. George's Bristol (which will also feature headline performances by Vanessa Kisule and Tony Walsh). The poems shown at the screening will be judged live by our three judges, with one wildcard finalist voted for by the Zoom audience. To enter the poetry slam, you must fill out the online entry form which may be found at www.lyrafest.com by March 31st, 2023. Hosted by Josie Alford.

Zoom's auto-transcription software will be available, but captions are not 100% accurate.



**SATURDAY 22ND APRIL -
 MONDAY 1ST MAY 2023**

CORE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

BRISTOL CITY OF WORDS

POETRY EXHIBITION

APRIL 22ND - MAY 1ST 2023

**BRISTOL BEACON
 GLASS ROOM**

Time: 8:00 - 18:00
 (10:00 - 16:00 Sundays)

Price: Free

This year, we are delighted to have a poetry exhibition open to the public for the duration of the festival. Situated at Bristol Beacon (the Glass Room is at the back of the main foyer upon entry), the exhibition will feature poems written by poets from all around the city, showcasing different voices, perspectives and communities in Bristol. The exhibition will also include a public poetry wall, where you can write your own Bristol poems using the materials provided and add them to the display.

Suitable for all ages.



SATURDAY, 22ND APRIL 2023



**POETRY AS CINEMA
 CAROLINE BIRD**

WRITING WORKSHOP

ONLINE ZOOM

Time: 10:30 - 12:00 Price: £7.50/£5

'The most beautiful videos come from reading poetry. And they're in your head.' Ruth Stone

Poetry has an unlimited special effects budget, its cinematography department is out of this world, and it isn't afraid to casually bend the laws of time and space. In this workshop, we'll be writing poems to deliberately and delightfully boggle our own minds.

This workshop will be BSL interpreted and live captioned.



MISFITS ON THE MOVE

WALKING TOUR

MEETING POINT HARBOURSIDE

Time: 11:30 - 12:30 Price: £5

An audio poetry walk on the Echoes App.

Experience original, site-specific poetry created by the Misfits poetry group, inspired by our favourite places around the harbour. The poetry walk starts at the Mirror Ball outside We The Curious and ends at M Shed. We have drawn inspiration from the places where we feel safe and from the history of the harbour. See familiar places from our perspective and enjoy a walk by the water. Includes some steps and cobbles. Roughly 30 - 45 minutes.

After this in-person walk accompanied by the writers, you will then be able to access the guided audio walk for free, whenever you like, through the app (you will need your own headphones). You can use the QR code, pictured right, to access the walk.

Misfits poetry group is supported by Anita Karla Kelly (loud word) and Frank Spencer (Red Weather Productions).

www.misfitstheatre.com



SATURDAY, 22ND APRIL 2023

THE LONG POEM ANTHONY ANAXAGOROU

WORKSHOP

BRISTOL BEACON MEETING ROOM 1

Time: 14:30 - 16:30 Price: £7.50/£5

In this workshop participants will study and discuss the mechanics of a long poem (or epic). How does a poet manage to sustain an idea while simultaneously unravelling new and unexpected turns? What are the key elements that go into making a long poem work, and how should one go about deciding subject and themes?

Together participants will be asked to think about long poems which have stood the test of time, ones which feel expansive and elliptical while also being rooted in a central preoccupation.

The workshop will consist of close-reading a long poem then allocating time for discussion and writing. All abilities welcome.



POETRY AND BISCUITS JOHN HEGLEY

FAMILY/CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP

BRUNEL'S SS GREAT BRITAIN
MEDLOCK SPACE

Time: 14:30 - 16:00 Price: £5/£4

Join poet and musician John Hegley for an interactive creative workshop at Brunel's SS Great Britain. The session will cover writing, drawing, shading, and possibly singing, paper-folding and gesticulation. Subjects may include, but are not limited to, trees, fish, ships, friendships, ship's armadillos, birds, biscuits and big footsteps. Suitable for those with ages in or around double figures. Includes biscuits for all participants!

Along with a mandolin, John brings to the table experience of performing to the mixed crowds of street entertainment and Glastonbury Festival, as well as in the rarefied atmosphere of the Southbank Centre and on stages in New Zealand, Columbia and Rotherham.

BRISTOL'S BLACK WRITERS BEYOND THE MARGINS

PUBLIC TALK

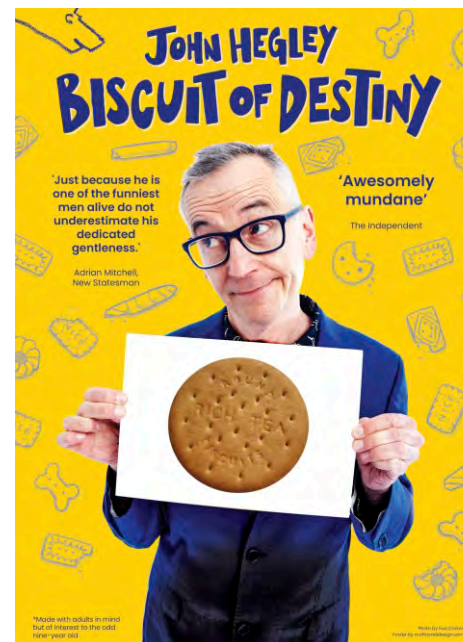
BRISTOL CENTRAL LIBRARY CAFÉ SPACE

Time: 17:30 - 18:30 Price: Free

This year's Lyra Festival public talk will be delivered by writer, poet and creative producer Ros Martin, charting the untold histories and contributions of Bristol's black writers, poets and creatives, past and present, visibilising the role that writing has played as a voice for local communities. Ros Martin is a founder member of Bristol Black Women's Writers group 2002-2005 and Our Stories Make Waves, African diaspora artists in creativity, and recently published *Before I Am Rendered Invisible: Resistance From the Margins*. Every passage rings with the call for social justice and equal empowerment, whilst celebrating lives of struggle in creativity, resistance and survival.

Followed by a Q&A + book signing.

This event will be BSL interpreted.



JOHN HEGLEY BISCUIT OF DESTINY

PERFORMANCE

ARNOLFINI

Time: 19:00 - 20:30 Price: £10/£8

Biscuit of Destiny is the new show from celebrated poet and musician John Hegley. Across a 90-minute performance, John introduces a clutch of new verses, a few older favourites and a cardboard camel with a moving jaw.

The biscuits in the show derive from a phrase used by Romantic Poet, John Keats: 'a scarcity of buiscuit' - neither the subject matter nor the spelling you would expect from a Romantic poet. The show delves into the more eccentric side of Keats, alongside everyday goings-on in the Hegley homes of now and yesteryear. The show won a Lustrum Award at the Edinburgh Festival 2022.

SUNDAY, 23RD APRIL 2023



IMAGE NAOMI WODDIS

CURATING YOUR FIRST COLLECTION AMY ACRE

WRITING WORKSHOP

ST. GEORGE'S BRISTOL GLASS STUDIO

Time: 10:00 - 11:45 Price: £7.50/£5

Curating your first collection is an exciting task that's worth taking time over. A collection can create a structure for play and experimentation and presents a great opportunity to expand your practice. In this workshop, we'll look at voice, narrative, form and structure, as well as at practical steps to building and selling your manuscript, from a poetry editor's point of view.

ISAMBARDS

WALKING TOUR

MEETING POINT
 ELECTRICITY HOUSE

Time: 11:00 - 12:00 Price: £5

A poetry walk through Bristol city centre, led by the IsamBards, Pameli Benham, Dominic Fisher, Deborah Harvey and David C Johnson, who will share their original poems inspired by the places and people on this poetic promenade from Electricity House (Colston Avenue BS1 4TB) to Queen Square. We'll meet kings and queens and Inuit captives, Neptune and Gary Cooper, picnickers and rioters, as well as encountering voices from Bristol's darker past and involvement in the transatlantic slave trade. The walk will take just over an hour, entirely on level ground.



IMAGE SAM BURNETT

THE SHORT POEM JACOB SAM-LA ROSE

WRITING WORKSHOP

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL GLASS STUDIO

Time: 12:00 - 13:45 Price: £7.50/£5

Boundaries and limitations can be seen as constricting, but can also provide us with a sense of freedom. The short poem can offer a point of focus for approaching the essential, or allow us to construct a larger movement in discrete, contained steps. Moving through the affordances of haiku, tanka and American sentences, we'll look at possibilities for short poems, and consider how to devise our own constraints and short forms. An invitation to establish a playful practice, a gateway to working with forms and formal constraints (if you've ever found the idea of form challenging), or an invitation to see what's possible beyond the longer poems you may be more used to.

SMALL PRESS SYMPOSIUM

PANEL DISCUSSION + Q&A

Featuring panelists Ghazal Mosadeq (Pamenar Press), Jacob Sam-la Rose (flipped eye), Amy Acre (Bad Betty Press), Anthony Anaxagorou (Out-Spoken Press) and Leire Barrera-Medrano (Girasol Press).

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL GLASS STUDIO

Time: 14:15 - 15:15 Price: Free

Poetry on the page is changing. With the rise of the internet, the landscape for sharing work is shifting rapidly, with more independent publishers and more opportunities to become a published poet. What does this mean for new and emerging writers? For historically underrepresented voices? Or for the future of poetry in print? If you're curious about the inner workings of independent publishers, getting your own work published and meeting fellow poets, this event will bring you insight from experts in the field today.

This event will be BSL interpreted.



SUNDAY, 23RD APRIL 2023

MULTILINGUAL POETRY

READING/PERFORMANCE

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL GLASS STUDIO

Time: 15:45 - 16:45 Price: Free

There are nearly 100 languages spoken in Bristol, and the city is home to a thriving community of poets harnessing poetry's power to communicate across cultures and languages. As part of this year's City of Words theme, come and experience a special multilingual event and hear the sonic possibilities that arise when poets perform in their own languages, from Spanish to Somali. English text versions will be projected in the background. The showcase will be headlined by DL Williams, performing work from their collection *Interdimensional Traveller*, exploring British Sign Language and English.

Presented in partnership with Bristol Poetry Institute.

This event will be BSL interpreted.



POETRY, FORM AND PROTEST

ANTHONY ANAXAGOROU & SAFIYA KAMARIA KINSHASA

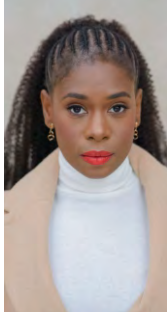
POETRY READING/ PERFORMANCE + Q&A

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL GLASS STUDIO

Time: 17:00 - 18:00 Price: £5

Anthony Anaxagorou's *Heritage Aesthetics* and Safiya Kamaria Kinshasa's *Cane, Corn & Gully* are two of the UK's most critically acclaimed poetry collections of the past year. Both writers use poetic form in unique and unexpected ways to challenge historical narratives around colonialism and racism. Kinshasa uses labanotation and rhythm to analyse movement from Caribbean dance and explore black West Indian femininity. Anaxagorou unpacks the travelogues of colonial writers and military men alongside experiences of racism in the present, drawing on his family's own migratory histories.

Join these two innovative writers for an exclusive live reading of their work, followed by a conversation around how the manipulation of language and form can subvert expectations and reclaim, or create new, narratives.



LYRA GRAND SLAM FINALS

VANESSA KISUULE & TONY WALSH

POETRY SLAM

ST GEORGE'S BRISTOL MAIN HALL

Time: 19:00 - 22:00 Price: £10/8

Bristol's finest wordsmiths battle it out to be crowned the 2023 Lyra Bristol Slam Champion. The winning poet will need to impress the judging panel, as well as YOU, the audience, who have the biggest say of all. Raucous, energetic, passionate and audience-centred, this event always promises to bring poetry to life in an engaging and unexpected way.

This year's event will be headlined by former Bristol City Poet and UK National Slam Champion, Vanessa Kisuule, as well as one of the UK's most widely acclaimed professional poets, who has inspired audiences of millions - Tony Walsh! There will also be a performance from last year's Grand Slam Champion, Sven Stears.

MONDAY, 24TH APRIL 2023



SATELLITE OF LOVE x SONDER SPOKEN WORD FESTIVAL OPEN MIC

OPEN MIC

THE ORCHARD COFFEE & CO

Time: 19:00 - 21:00 Price: £3/£5/£7

Join regular Bristol poetry events Satellite of Love and Sonder Spoken Word for an extra-special Lyra Festival open mic at The Orchard Coffee & Co in East Bristol. Featuring guest performances from Bristol-based poets Muneera Pilgrim and Jade Ayino.

To sign up for this open mic, please email satelliteoflove@gmail.com - spaces will be limited, so advance sign-up is essential.

TUESDAY, 25TH APRIL 2023

BRISTOL TONIC x STONE THE CRONES FESTIVAL OPEN MIC

OPEN MIC

acta COMMUNITY THEATRE

Time: 19:00 - 21:00 Price: £3/£5/£7

Join regular Bristol poetry events Stone the Crones and Bristol Tonic for an extra-special Lyra open mic at acta Community Theatre in South Bristol. Featuring guest performances from Anita Karla Kelly and Thomas Kam.

To sign up for this open mic, please book an 'Open Mic Ticket' at the checkout. Spaces will be limited, so advance sign-up is essential.



WEDNESDAY, 26TH APRIL 2023

POETRY IN THE DARK

AUDIO SCREENING

WATERSHED

Time: 18:00 - 19:15 Price: £5

There's a natural kinship between radio and poetry. They are sister mediums, both concerned with sound, voice, breath, imagery, imagination and the built-in music of language.

In this communal, lights-out, deep-listening event, radio producer Mair Bosworth (BBC Radio 4/In the Dark) curates a selection of audio documentaries, experimental radio features and podcasts from the world's most innovative audio producers. Featuring the poetry of Ilya Kaminsky, Mary Oliver, Rainer Maria Rilke, Caleb Femi, Louis MacNeice and more.

Presented in partnership with *In the Dark*, an organisation celebrating the art of storytelling in sound.



FRIDAY, 28TH APRIL 2023

BRISTOL CITY OF WORDS KAT LYONS & MILES CHAMBERS

READING/PERFORMANCE

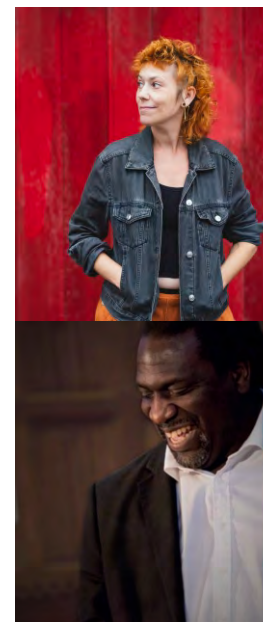
BRISTOL BEACON FOYER

Time: 19:30 - 21:00 Price: £5

Join current Bristol City Poet Kat Lyons (2022-2024) and former Bristol City Poet Miles Chambers (2016-2018), together with writers and creatives from communities all around Bristol, for this special showcase celebrating our 2023 festival theme, City of Words.

Hear poems written about Bristol, spanning an incredible range of perspectives, styles and themes. Miles and Kat will share some of the poems they were commissioned to write as City Poet, and poets from around the city will share newly written work from recent outreach workshops and activities. Audience members are invited to explore the Lyra Poetry Exhibition in the Bristol Beacon Glass Room and to write their very own Bristol poems to stick on the public poetry wall.

Presented in partnership with Bristol Ideas and part of Bristol 650.



SATURDAY, 29TH APRIL 2023

APPLES AND SNAKES RETREAT

WORKSHOPS AND ACTIVITIES

HAMILTON HOUSE

Time: 10:00 - 16:00 Price: Free

A one-day event for poets at all stages to refresh, reboot and connect. The retreat offers creative workshops, discussions, mentoring and practical advice to reenergise your practice, soothe your soul and leave you with a new spring in your step. Led by acclaimed poetry and wellbeing facilitators. Last year's retreat sold out and, although places are free, it is essential to book in advance.

APPLES AND SNAKES

Presented in partnership with Apples and Snakes.



POETRY BY HEART

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERFORMANCES

ST. GEORGE'S BRISTOL MAIN HALL

Time: 13:00 - 15:00 Price: Free

A free, fun and inspiring afternoon for children, young people and families. Young people from schools in Bristol and the surrounding areas will perform some of your favourite poems, old and new. The event will feature special performances from acclaimed UK poets. Children and young people aged 7-18 can sign up to perform by contacting info@poetrybyheart.org.uk.

Presented in partnership with Poetry By Heart.

POETRY BY HEART



JOHN AGARD WINDRUSH CHILD

CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE

BRUNEL'S SS GREAT BRITAIN VIRIDOR THEATRE

Time: 15:00 - 16:00 Price: £5/£4

We are delighted to present another afternoon of family poetry fun at Brunel's SS Great Britain. Join legendary poet John Agard for a special reading of *Windrush Child*, plus works from his other children's books, which include *When Creature Met Creature* and *Follow That Word*.

The event will take place at the Viridor Theatre, with the stunning backdrop of the dockyard and ship. Followed by a Q&A and book signing. Suitable for ages 6+ and the whole family.

"you're stepping into history bringing your Caribbean eye to another horizon"

Event produced in association with Renaissance One.



HOLLIE MCNISH + MICHAEL PEDERSEN + MALAIKA KEGODE

READING/PERFORMANCE

ST. GEORGE'S BRISTOL MAIN HALL

Time: 19:00 - 21:00 Price: £12/£8

Hollie McNish is a *Sunday Times* bestselling author and poet whose live readings are not to be missed. Here, she will be reading from her latest collections, plus new work, joined by fellow poet Michael Pedersen, reading from his brand new collection, *The Cat Prince and Boy Friends*, his poetic memoir about friendship, which Stephen Fry has declared 'enchanting...astonishingly compelling...rare and to be treasured'. The event includes a performance by Lyra's 2023 Festival Poet Malaika Kegode.

Expect strong language and adult content, ribbon-wrapped in carefully and caringly crafted poetry from their latest collections.

Presented in partnership with Raise the Bar.



SUNDAY, 30TH APRIL 2023

THE MUM POET CLUB

WORKSHOP

BLUEBELL CARE TRUST

Time: 11:30 - 12:30

Price: Free

The Mum Poet Club was born in lockdown, as a way to connect, support and encourage poetry-writing parents. This workshop is open to any mums with a child under one. No writing experience is needed, everyone is welcome (including babies), and it is free to join.

'This organisation is amazing for any women who fancy giving poetry a go as a way to express all the ups and lows of motherhood - it is so welcoming' - Hollie McNish

Presented in partnership with Mum Poem Press.



ARRIVAL: FINDING HOME IN THE CITY MALAIKA KEGODE

WRITING WORKSHOP

BRISTOL BEACON MEETING ROOM 1

Time: 12:00 - 14:00 Price: £5

A new city always seems vast and unknowable. In time, the same city can become part of your bones. A city you know can also change over time, becoming more or less familiar to you, or showing new parts of itself. Join Malaika Kegode in exploring the magic of moving to, visiting or rediscovering an unfamiliar city, and what this can reveal about the creative self.

Through discussion, writing exercises, and examining inspiring source materials, we'll write an ode to relocation, whether permanent or temporary. We'll pause in the middle of the bustle to find the stories hiding in the cracks of the pavement.

IMAGE PAUL BLAKEMORE



POETRY IN MOTION

FILM SCREENING/Q&A

Lyra's 2023 film screening showcases short poetry films by creatives of African/Caribbean origin or descent.

ARNOLFINI THEATRE

Time: 14:30 - 15:30 Price: Free

Poetry In Motion is a curation of poetry film by the award-winning writer, poet, film maker and host Be Manzini. A selection of short poetry films (defined as film that incorporates or animates poetry) by creatives of African/Caribbean origin or descent. Expect to experience a range of poetic and film-making styles, inspired by established and emerging Black British artists, spotlighting their lived experiences and affirming poetry as musical thought.

Followed by a Q&A with Be Manzini.

The film screening and Q&A will be BSL interpreted, and the film screening itself will be captioned.



NATURE IN THE CITY

POETRY READING/OPEN MIC

An ecopoetry reading and open mic.

ARNOLFINI THEATRE

Time: 16:00 - 18:00

Price: Free

Nature isn't separate from city, but everywhere around us. Come join four area poets, Carrie Etter, Pey Oh, Caleb Parkin, and Samantha Walton, as they read poems that explore nature in/of/and the city.

There will also be an open mic for poems on the same theme. For a possible place at the event, please email your poem to carrie.etter@gmail.com.



SUNDAY, 30TH APRIL 2023



JOHN AGARD AND FRIENDS SPOKEN WORD MEETS CARNIVAL

READING/PERFORMANCE

An evening of Caribbean poetry and music, headlined by the legendary John Agard.

BRISTOL OLD VIC

Time: 19:00 - 22:00 Price: £8/£5

On the 60th Anniversary of the Bristol Bus Boycott, Renaissance One and Lyra Festival present *We Liming* - an evening of Caribbean poetry and music at Bristol Old Vic, headlined by the legendary John Agard.

The lineup includes calypsonian musician Tobago Crusoe, poet and artist Valda Jackson via her actor daughter Georgia Jackson, as well as Muneera Pilgrim and other local poets. Co-hosted by Dr. Edson Burton and Melanie Abrahams.

We Liming is a party of spoken word, poets, wordsmiths, calypsonians and a house DJ, who invite you to join in and go with the flow. Featuring poets all of Caribbean heritage, the performers carry personal and myriad definitions of what the Windrush Generation and Caribbeanness means to them.

The event will be BSL interpreted.



MONDAY, 1ST MAY 2023



BRISTOL .vs. WESTON SLAM

POETRY SLAM

Bristol's Milk Poetry and Culture Weston's Rhyme Against the Tide present this epic contest between seaside town and bustling city.

WARDROBE THEATRE

Time: 19:30 - 22:00 Price: £5

A poetic battle between Bristol and Weston-super-Mare, as seaside town and bustling city go head-to-head in this epic slam contest. With performances from three poets on each team, three poet judges will choose a winner, in this fun, energetic and powerful evening of delicious wordsmithery. The teams will be captained by Milk Poetry's Tom Denbigh and Culture Weston's Sophie Shepherd, and features guest performances from Tyrone Lewis and Aiysha Humphreys. Don't miss out on this South West Showdown!

Presented in partnership with Bristol's fabulous regular slam Milk Poetry and Culture Weston's Rhyme Against the Tide.



POST-FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

MONDAY, 26TH JUNE 2023



QUEERING THE CITY BRISTOL PRIDE 2023

PERFORMANCE + OPEN MIC

OLD MARKET ASSEMBLY

Time: 19:30 - 22:00 Price: £3/£5/£7

A performance, open mic and social for Bristol's LGBTQIA+ poetry communities and straight allies. We'll hear a series of newly commissioned poems exploring various ways we might 'queer' Bristol: in the ways we navigate the city; its underrepresented queer pasts; our dwindling shared spaces. The commissions will celebrate Bristol's queer artists and literature, visioning futures - human and beyond - of sparkling queer horizons. After the new commissions and an open mic for LGBTQIA+ poets, there'll be a chance to mingle and wiggle, with music and a bar.

Please buy an 'Open Mic Ticket' at checkout to sign up to perform.



With 5 different hotels to choose from, Clifton Hotels have something for every taste and budget.

A **10% discount** is available for Lyra Festival attendees using the discount code **LYRA23**. Please quote this code at any of the hotels, via phone or email, or use it on the website checkout.

Located in elegant Clifton, each hotel is situated in a beautiful Georgian building. All are individually styled and bursting with charm and character. Our Bristol hotels enjoy a long-established reputation for excellent service in a relaxed environment, and we look forward to welcoming you soon.

POETRY READING GROUPS



Join the reading revolution. Shared Reading at Lyra Poetry Festival.

Shared Reading groups bring people together through great literature to talk, laugh and share. You might be new to poetry or already a keen reader. All welcome. Each week we read new poems and stories and talk about them in any way we want to. Or just relax and listen - there's no pressure to read aloud and a group leader chooses what we'll read and helps everyone get the most out of it.

All these groups are open to anyone to drop in and try it out:

Bishopston Library
 Gloucester Rd, BS7 8BN
 Thursdays 11.30am

Bristol Central Library
 College Green, BS1 5TL
 Thursdays TIME TBC

Easton Community Centre
 Kilburn St, BS5 6AW
 Tuesdays 10.00am

Henleaze Library
 Northumbria Drive, BS9 4HP
 Wednesdays 2.00pm

Greenway Centre
 Doncaster Rd, BS10 5PY
 Tuesdays 2.00pm

Knowle Library
 Boardwalk Shopping Centre,
 BS4 2QU Thursdays 1:00pm
 (fortnightly, 6th April, then
 20th April etc)

Monica Wills House
 off West Street, BS3 3NH
 Wednesdays 2.00pm
 (fortnightly, 22nd March,
 then 5th April etc)

Redland Library
 Whiteladies Rd, BS8 2PY
 Tuesdays 2.00pm

St Anne's House
 St Anne's Rd, BS4 4AB
 Wednesdays 10.30am

St Paul's Library
 Grosvenor Rd, BS2 8XJ
 Mondays 2.00pm

For latest updates, new groups, and dates of fortnightly groups see website or email info@thereader.org.uk

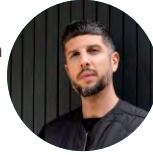


ARTISTS & SPEAKERS

AIYSHA HUMPHREYS is a poet and performer from Cornwall, living in Bristol. They have performed all over the UK and last year worked in Romania with Tongue Fu exploring the relationship between music and spoken word. They were the poet in residence for the SS Great Britain in 2022 and their first poetry pamphlet, *Saints of Golden Hour*, was released in February which treads soberness, girlhood, queer relationships and the gods we create for ourselves.



ANTHONY ANAXAGOROU is a British-born Cypriot poet, fiction writer, essayist, publisher and poetry educator. He has published three volumes of poetry, one collection of short stories, along with a craft book entitled *How To Write It*. He is the founder and artistic director of Out-Spoken Live, a monthly poetry and music night held at London's Southbank Centre. He's also the publisher at Out-Spoken Press and founder of *Propel Magazine*.



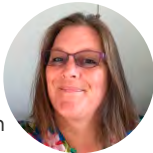
AMY ACRE is a poet and freelance writer, and the editor of award-winning indie publisher, Bad Betty Press. Her pamphlets *And They Are Covered in Gold Light* (Bad Betty, 2019) and *Where We're Going, We Don't Need Roads* (flipped eye, 2015) were both chosen as a Poetry Book Society Pamphlet Choice. Her debut collection, *Mothersong*, is forthcoming from Bloomsbury Publishing. Amy was born in London and lives in Nottingham.



APPLES AND SNAKES are England's leading spoken word poetry organisation, supporting poets at all stages of their careers. Working with inspiring people and organisations, they run regular live events and artist development programmes across the country. Apples and Snakes champion the development of extraordinary artists. Want to get involved in spoken word? You are in the right place.



ANITA KARLA KELLY. Writer. Positive deviant. Anita loves small moments of unexpected magic - like when a cup of tea makes the world right. *'Daringly dangerous'* - Jack Thorne. *'Great, uninhibited writing'* - The Guardian.



BE MANZINI, known as the 'film poet', uniquely combines passions for film, poetry and activism. She is director and host for Caramel Film Club, which focuses on black creatives. Published by Peepal Tree Press, flipped eye and Arachne Press, Manzini was crowned the Poetry in Film category and overall winner of the Out-Spoken Poetry Prize 2022. Manzini is Zimbabwean born of Zulu and mSwati heritage and currently resides in London. Instagram: @bemanzini @caramelfilmclub



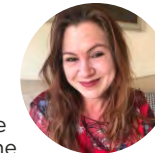
BECCY GOLDING writes about life, grief, motherhood, womanhood and being a human. Beccy runs Stone the Crones - a spoken word night & poetry workshops celebrating the powerful creative voices of older/ageing/elder women. She has written a poem every day since 29 April 2021. @fridayispoetsday @stonethecrones



CALEB PARKIN, Bristol City Poet 2020 - 22, has poems in *The Guardian*, *Poetry Review*, *Magma* and *The Rialto*. He holds an MSc Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes and tutors for Poetry Society, Poetry School and Arvon. Publications: *Wasted Rainbow* (tall-lighthouse); *This Fruiting Body* (Nine Arches Press, longlisted Laurel Prize), *All the Cancelled Parties* (Bristol Ideas), *The Coin* (Broken Sleep). He is currently a practice-based PhD candidate at the University of Exeter.



CARRIE ETTER is an American expatriate who has lived in England since 2001 and is a member of the creative writing faculty at the University of Bristol. She has published four collections, most recently *The Weather in Normal* (UK: Seren; US: Station Hill, 2018), a Poetry Book Society Recommendation; individual poems have appeared in *The New Statesman*, *The Penguin Book of the Prose Poem*, *Poetry Review*, *The TLS*, and many other periodicals and anthologies internationally. She also writes short fiction, essays, and reviews.



CAROLINE BIRD is a poet and playwright. Her sixth collection, *The Air Year*, won the Forward Prize for Best Collection 2020 and was shortlisted for the Polari Prize and the Costa Prize. Her fifth collection, *In These Days of Prohibition*, was shortlisted for the 2017 TS Eliot Prize and the Ted Hughes Award. She won an Eric Gregory Award in 2002 and was shortlisted for the Geoffrey Dearmer Prize in 2001 and the Dylan Thomas Prize in 2008 and 2010. She was one of the five official poets at the 2012 London Olympics. Her Selected Poems, *Rookie*, was published in May 2022.



DR CLIFF WILLIAMSON is Senior Lecturer in History in the School of Writing, Publishing and the Humanities at Bath Spa University. He has written on the history of public health, urban politics, popular culture and religion, especially on the subject of his home city of Glasgow. In addition, he has written about US presidential history, the faith of Margaret Thatcher, Teddy Boys and the Beatles. He lives in Bath with his cat, Dexter.



DL WILLIAMS is a deaf, queer poet, working with British Sign Language and English. Working with such different languages has inspired a deep interest in translation and how her work can be made accessible to signing and non-signing audiences. They have performed around the UK including at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Wales Millennium Centre, the Barbican and the Albert Hall, as well as in America and Brazil. Her bilingual poetry collection, *Interdimensional Traveller*, was published by Burning Eye Books in April 2022.



DR EDSON BURTON is a poet, drama writer, curator and historian. In performance and on the page, Edson combines storytelling with a deep love for the power of words. His work includes commissions for Situations and the Welsh National Opera. Edson has delivered workshops in schools, prisons, churches, and community settings. He is the author of poetry collection *Seasoned* (2007). Edson was Lyra's 2022 Festival Poet.



HOLLIE MCNISH is a Sunday Times bestselling author based between Cambridge and Glasgow. She won the Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry for her poetic parenting memoir *Nobody Told Me*, of which *The Scotsman* stated, 'The world needs this book'. She has published four further collections of poetry: *Papers*, *Cherry Pie*, *Plum*, and her most recent poetic memoir, *Slug...and other things I've been told to hate*, which covers topics from grief to otters, grandmothers to Finnish saunas. She has just completed a re-imagining of Sophocles' Greek tragedy *Antigone*. She really loves plums and writing poems.



GHAZAL MOSADEG is a poet, editor and translator. She is the founder of Pamenar Press, an independent publisher producing books of poetry, hybrid and critical writing which are cross-cultural and multilingual. Her own work has been published internationally by gamm Press, Tamaast, Litmus Press, *Poetry Wales*, *Firmament*, *WD40*, *Revista de poesía, ensayo y crítica*, *Oversound* and *Blackbox Manifold*, among others. She is a member of the editorial advisory board for the Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry.



THE ISAMBARDS, who celebrate their tenth birthday this year, are Pamel Benham, Dominic Fisher, Deborah Harvey and David C Johnson. They write and share original poems inspired by people and places and unite the pleasures of walking and poetry. Their previous walks have included Brunel's Bristol, the Clifton Suspension Bridge, Arnos Vale Cemetery, Poets' Park and Bristol Botanic Garden, where they were socially distanced pop-up poets and, in normal times, lead regular poetry walks.



GEORGIA JACKSON graduated from Rose Bruford in 2019 with a BA in Acting. She then spent Christmas in Neverland, making her professional debut as Wendy in *Peter Pan* at Storyhouse, Chester. She subsequently joined the cast of *Oliver Twist* for Leeds Playhouse and Ramps on the Moon. Since then, Georgia has continued to have a busy and varied career across stage, screen and voiceover, most recently appearing as Stick Lady Love in Freckle's production of *Stick Man* at Leeds Playhouse and Victoria Theatre in Singapore.



JACOB SAM-LA ROSE is a poetry editor for flipped eye publishing and leads the Barbican Young Poets programme. He has served as poet-in-residence for Raffles Institution (Singapore), poetry professor at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and artistic director for the Spoken Word Education Programme (Goldsmiths University). His poetry has been translated into Portuguese, Latvian, French and Dutch. His collection *Breaking Silence* is required reading for the OCR English Language/Literature A-level syllabus and was shortlisted for a Fenton Aldeburgh award and a Forward Poetry prize.



JADE AYINO's work naturally tends to explore themes of fragility within social constructs, the autonomy in femininity, and the introspectiveness of intersectionality. The aim of her work is to blur, bend and bounce the boundaries between creative disciplines, creating focus on shifting art culture to be more immersive and accessible, whilst curiously finding new ways to entertain, educate and influence herself, along with future and past generations.



JOHN AGARD is a poet, playwright and short story writer who grew up in Guyana, where his love of language sparked from listening to cricket commentaries on the radio. He is well-known for his playful style and charismatic performances. Over his long career he has won many prizes, including the Smarties Book Prize, the Queen's Gold Medal, and the prestigious BookTrust Lifetime Achievement Award for an outstanding contribution to children's literature. He is widely studied on the National Curriculum. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.



JOHN HEGLEY led two John Peel sessions with his band The Popticians on Radio1 in 1983/4, hosted the Border TV poetry series Word of Mouth in 1989 and was a Perrier Comedy Award nominee in the same year. There have been three series of *Hearing with Hegley* on BBC Radio 4 (1996-2000) and Hegley was the BBC Online poet in residence 1999. Hegley was Keats House poet in residence in 2012 and in 2019 Arts Council England funded his touring collaborative project *Putting You in the Picture*, working with fellow poets to take children to art galleries to delve into and respond to artworks with drawing, writing and cut-out paper characters.



JOSIE ALFORD is a Bristol-based poet and freelance creative. Once seen, never forgotten, her work ranges from the subtlety of dealing with loss to analysing the nuanced discography of the Spice Girls. She makes YouTube videos on all things poetry and book nerdery, covering subjects from writing poetry to getting your collection published. Her debut poetry collection, *Faulty Manufacturing*, is published by Verve Poetry Press.



KAT LYONS (they/them) is a Queer Bristol-based writer, performer, workshop facilitator and creative producer, whose work is grounded in everyday politics and a love of storytelling. Kat is the official Bristol City Poet (2022-2024) and is currently touring *Dry Season*, a spoken word theatre show exploring gender, age and menopause. Their debut poetry collection, *Love Beneath the Nails*, is available now from Verve Poetry Press. Kat performs throughout the UK and was nominated for the 2022 Jerwood Poetry in Performance Award. They are passionate about using stories to re/connect people to themselves, each other and their environment.



LEIRE BARRERA MEDRANO is Lecturer in Spanish Studies at the University of Bath and co-editor of Girasol Press, a small publisher of experimental translation. She wrote a PhD thesis on Decadence and the Anglo-Spanish encounter at Birkbeck College, University of London. Interests include translation, linguistic resistance and radical herbalism. She was raised in the Basque Country and lives in Bristol.



MADHU KRISHNAN is

Professor of African, World and Comparative Literatures at the University of Bristol, where she currently serves as Director for the Centre for Black Humanities. She is author of *Contemporary African Literature in English: Global Locations, Postcolonial Identifications* (2014), *Writing Spatiality in West Africa: Colonial Legacies in the Anglophone/Francophone Novel* (2018) and *Contingent Canons: African Literature and the Politics of Location* (2018). She is currently working on a five-year project funded by the ERC titled 'Literary Activism in Sub-Saharan Africa: Commons, Publics and Networks of Practice'.



MAIR BOSWORTH is a radio producer with the BBC, where she works on shows like *Soul Music*, *Word of Mouth with Michael Rosen*, *Poetry Please* and *The Untold*.

She has a special interest in adapting fiction, essays and poetry for radio, and has collaborated with poets, including Caleb Femi, Fiona Benson, Andrew McMillan and Daljit Nagra, to make original works for radio. She is part of In the Dark - a collective of audio lovers who put on communal listening events to celebrate the best in radio and podcast storytelling.



MALAIKA KEGODE is an

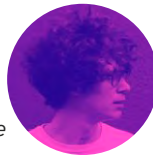
award-winning writer and performer based in Bristol. Beginning her arts career as a performance poet in 2014, Malaika has since developed her practice to encompass theatre, radio and film writing. Her autobiographical gig-theatre show *Outlier* debuted on Bristol Old Vic's main stage in 2021. Malaika's narrative work has also been featured on BBC Radio 4, and her poetry collections *Requite* and *Thalassic* are published by Burning Eye Books.



MELANIE ABRAHAMS FRSA FRSL is a curator, producer and mentor. She's founder of the independent literature organisation Renaissance One and artists and organisations she's worked with include Miami Book Fair, Chris Ofili, The Space, Museum of Modern Art (Finland) and the BBC. She was one of the curators and consultants for the recently unveiled Windrush Monument at London Waterloo. Her latest curated project, *This Is Who We Are*, is a newly-formed UK-Australian movement of intergenerational and intersectional women of colour artists and is within the British Council's UK-Australia season.



MICHAEL PEDERSEN is a prize-winning Scottish poet, author, scribbler, stitcher. His third collection of poetry, *The Cat Prince & Other Poems*, launches with Corsair / Little Brown in July 2023. His prose debut, *Boy Friends*, was published by Faber & Faber in 2022 to rave reviews, both in the UK and North America. With work anthologised by Pan MacMillan and Canongate Books, and fans that range from Stephen Fry and Shirley Manson to Kae Tempest and Irvine Welsh, Pedersen also co-founded the infamous Neu! Reekie! literary production house.



MILES CHAMBERS is a leading and popular poetic cultural commentator. He is an international performance poet, slam champion and playwright, and was Bristol's first City Poet. A broadcaster who has recently written and presented for the BBC series *Civilizations*, Miles has also been commissioned by Radio 4 and has featured in several of their programmes, including *Only Artist*, *Poetry Please* and *Poets in a Balloon*. His poetry can be seen all over Bristol, from a video performance at M-Shed to an exhibition at We the Curious, and is immortalised in metal grating on the walls of the Bristol Old Vic.



MUNEERA PILGRIM is an international poet, cultural producer, writer, community researcher, broadcaster, TEDx speaker and WOW Festival speaker. She conducts workshops, shares art, guest lectures, hosts, and finds alternative ways to educate and exchange ideas, while focusing on methodologies of empowerment for non-centred people. At heart, Muneera is a storyteller, concerned with telling stories to disrupt mainstream narratives of non-centred people globally.



PEY OH (she/her) is a Bath-based poet from Malaysia. Her debut pamphlet, *Pictograph*, was published by Flarestack Poetry in 2018. Her recent work can be found in *harana poetry*, *Butcher's Dog*, *Long Poem Magazine*, *Abridged*, *Iamb* and *Propel Magazine*. A Legitimate Snack, *Bagua*, was published by Broken Sleep Books in 2021. She is a Sky Arts Royal Society of Literature Poetry winner 2021.



ROS MARTIN is a Bristol-based author and spoken word artist. She is also an award-winning playwright and filmmaker, an experimental theatre maker and writer in schools. Her literary-based artist practice brings to the fore marginalised histories, lives and voices. Producer/director of *Daughters of Igbo Woman* (2017), a transnational trilogy of digital film shorts, collaborating with Akachi Ezeigbo (Nigeria) and Vida Rawlins (St Kitts). Author of *BEFORE I AM RENDERED VISIBLE*, resistance from the margins (publisher Arkbound). Olawalearts.org.uk



ROWENA KNIGHT's poetry is influenced by her identity as a queer feminist and childhood in New Zealand. Her poems have appeared in *Butcher's Dog*, *Magma*, *The Rialto*, and *The Emma Press Anthology of Love*, amongst others. Her debut pamphlet, *All the Footprints I Left Were Red*, is published by Valley Press. Rowena has performed at the Edinburgh Fringe and at spoken word events across Bristol and London.



SAFIYA KAMARIA KINSHASA is a British-born, Barbadian-raised poet, dancer and choreographer. Her interdisciplinary art braids dance and poetry on the page and stage. She is also a PhD student in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds. Her debut collection *Cane, Corn & Gully* was the Poetry Book Society's Winter Choice. Safiya is an Obsidian Foundation fellow and an Apples & Snakes/Jerwood Arts Poetry in Performance recipient. Her notable commissions include writing for English Heritage, BBC Bitesize and The Wailers. Her work has appeared in a variety of journals, including *Poetry London*, *Poetry Review*, *Caribbean Writer* and *Wasafiri*.



SAMANTHA WALTON is a writer, researcher and editor, based in Bristol. Her most recent book, *Everybody Needs Beauty: In Search of the Nature Cure* (Bloomsbury) is a work of nature writing and cultural history which explores the nature-wellbeing connection in the context of ecological crisis and late capitalism. Her poetry includes *Self Heal* (Boiler House Press), a collection of ecological lyrics, and *Bad Moon* (Spam Press), an ecogothic feminist horror story about the end of the world. She is Reader in Modern Literature at Bath Spa University and Director of the Research Centre for Environmental Humanities.



SVEN STEARS is a multi-grand-slam champion and performance poet. He has performed across the UK and Europe, winning multiple slams in both the UK and Germany. His heartfelt poetry touches on themes of personal loss, societal trauma, mental health and addiction, but always with little messages of hope.



THOMAS KAM started life as a poet and classical pianist, with these interests eventually converging into his current work as a singer/songwriter and performer. Thomas brings his background in classical and jazz piano, folk guitar and page poetry to form a unique style of music, overlaid with his expressive voice. His music has been described as 'Leonard Cohen meets Ludivoci Einaudi meets Jeff Buckley.' In 2017, Thomas spent 9 months being treated for leukaemia in isolation. Much of his current work is a response to this experience.



TOBAGO CRUSOE is a calypsonian, composer, musician and a performing artist with over 30 years' experience. He won the Calypso Crown in 1983 with *Don't Cry Now* and *South Africa*. Crusoe is well-regarded for his extempo mastery and ranks with the best in the art form. His compositions are unique and thought-provoking, and he has appeared in the films *Paddington* and *Paddington 2* and the CD of the same name. Crusoe has performed around the world to international audiences, including festivals and events in Madison Square Garden, Turin, Barcelona and Germany. He was awarded with a position in the Sunshine Awards Hall of Fame for his contribution to calypso music (2011).



TONY WALSH is one of the UK's most widely acclaimed professional poets, a writer and performer of remarkable breadth and depth, whose powerful words regularly reach and inspire audiences of millions. Whether earning a standing ovation from a BAFTA audience, sharing arena and rock festival main stages with superstars, performing to packed sports stadiums or writing for peak-time TV, this is a poet consistently blazing a dazzling web of trails where very few have gone before. The now iconic performance of his poem 'This Is The Place' in the wake of the Manchester Arena bombing reached a truly global audience in 2017.



TYRONE LEWIS is a UK Poetry Slam champion, Roundhouse Poetry Slam champion, Axis Poetry Slam champion and author of debut collection *Blackish*. Tyrone is the founder of Process Production as well as its monthly spoken word night Process. He was also one of the inaugural Albany Associate Artists. As well as performing, Tyrone is known for hosting, producing and featuring at many spoken word nights across the UK.



VANESSA KISUULE is a writer, performer and facilitator, based in Bristol. She has won over ten slam titles and performed nationally and internationally. She has been featured on BBC iPlayer, Radio 1, Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*, *Blue Peter* and TEDx in Vienna. She was the Bristol City Poet for 2018 - 2020, has two poetry collections with Burning Eye Books and her poetry has been widely anthologised. She is the co-tutor for the Southbank New Poets Collective.



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We are incredibly grateful to the partner organisations who have helped make Lyra Festival 2023 possible.

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