

BBC CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE

POETRY & PERFORMANCE
8TH - 11TH SEPT 2022

ONLINE, IN PERSON, AND BROADCAST
ACROSS THE BBC:

JOIN THE POETRY AND PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL
TAKING PLACE IN BIRMINGHAM



THUR 8TH SEPTEMBER



CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE FESTIVAL LAUNCH
WITH LIZ BERRY, ROMALYN ANTE, NAFEESA HAMID,
LUKE KENNARD, ROY MCFARLANE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PWC ROOM
18:00 – 19:00

We can't wait to welcome you to BBC Contains Strong Language 2022. To start the whole thing off we have invited poets Liz Berry, Luke Kennard, Romalyn Ante, Roy McFarlane and Nafeesa Hamid to read some of their wonderful poetry while we raise a glass to all that is to come!



LIVE R4 FRONT ROW
WITH NICK AHAD

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **LIVE**
19:15 – 20:00

In the opening event of Contains Strong Language, Front Row live with Nick Ahad celebrates the dub poet Linton Kwesi Johnson as he turns 70 and his native Jamaica turns 60. Plus a sneak preview of Peaky Blinders: The Redemption of Thomas Shelby, a dance-theatre show by Rambert inspired by the hit TV series and set to tour the UK.

CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE POETS
READ OUT

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PWC ROOM
20:15 – 22:00

Our Contains Strong Language poets have arrived from all corners of the Commonwealth and you can catch them performing across the weekend. At this event we welcome Kayo Chingonyi (UK), Tishani Doshi (India), Alvin Pang (Singapore), Ellen Van Neerven (Australia), Saradha Soobrayen (UK) and Efe Paul Azino (Nigeria) to perform their wonderful work. That's not to mention an open mic, inviting you to join the conversation.



SIZWE BANZI IS DEAD

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
20:40 – 22:10

A new production. A brilliant, funny and moving play set at the height of apartheid, co-written by one of South Africa's most famous playwrights, Athol Fugard. When a man arrives to have his image taken for his passport, we tip back in time to discover the chilling reasons of how and why he needed a new photograph. A thought provoking, captivating drama about oppression, power, racism and identity.

FRI 9TH SEPTEMBER

ELENA KARINA BYRNE WORKSHOP
THE DEMOCRACY OF HOPE: HOW ECO WRITING INSPIRES
OUR VALUABLE CONNECTION TO THE FUTURE

POLINATIONS, WONDERSPHERE
10:00 – 11:30

Global warming is not just an existential crisis—it embodies an extreme form of social injustice, endangering the health and dignity of all humans. When sight marries insight, we will explore hope as a motivational resource, the imagination's empowering investment in navigating resilience and renewal.



START THE WEEK
WITH TOM SUTCLIFFE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **4**
11:00 – 12:00
Forget the North-South divide, what about the 'squeezed middle'? On Start the Week Tom Sutcliffe and guests focus on the Midlands and the cultural and political status of the country's 'second city' Birmingham. With guests Kit de Waal, historian Richard Vinen and the poet Liz Berry.

THE LAUREL PRIZE WORKSHOP
WITH GLYN MAXWELL

POLINATIONS, WONDERSPHERE
12:00 – 13:30
Glyn Maxwell will lead a poetry workshop combining the timeless things (deep reading, wide thinking, writing games and conversation) with the urgent things (climate change, nature in turmoil, humanity barely waking up) at the end of which fun and fruitful time we may not have the answers, but we'll have put the questions better.



THE ESSAY

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
12:30 – 13:00
The Essay – Double Vision. Two writers deliver newly-commissioned essays exploring how their connections to the Commonwealth have offered them second perspectives on life and creativity. Joined by the poets Tishani Doshi and Roy McFarlane.

LANGUAGE IS A QUEER THING (THE EXPERIENCE)
WORKSHOP

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM
13:00 – 15:00
Meet some of the poets from Language is a Queer Thing to discuss the skills and techniques they explored as part of our partnership with The Queer Muslim Project, which connected queer poets in India and the UK. How does context effect the writing of queerness? Can these experiences be translated across countries and cultures? Let's talk about it!



ACROSS BORDERS:
POEMS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
13:30 – 15:00

Join all 18 of the poets involved in our Across Borders – Poems from the Commonwealth project, presented by Birmingham 2022 Festival, and help them launch their Across Borders anthology of new work that has resulted from their ten week partnership. What should we learn from each other? What can we share? 18 poets, 18 brand new poems.



LAUREL PRIZE READING

POLINATIONS, WONDERPHERE
14:30 – 15:30

The Laurel Prize for eco and nature poetry is the world's largest prize for best collection awarded annually. Join this year's judges Glyn Maxwell (Chair), Tishani Doshi and Elena Karina Byrne for a very special reading highlighting their own work and their relationship with poetry climate activism.

BOHDAN PIASECKI WORKSHOP
PERFORMING YOUR POETRY

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM
15:30 – 17:30
£15/£10
Renowned poet Bohdan will explore ways that performance techniques can enhance your poetry, how you can breathe life into them, how with a little thought, planning and practice, you can make your poetry sing! All levels of poetry experience welcome!

THE ESSAY

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
15:30 – 16:30
Three writers deliver newly-commissioned essays exploring how their connections to the Commonwealth have offered them second perspectives on life and creativity. With Isabelle Baafi, Alvin Pang and Anil Pradhan.

BBC WORDS FIRST READING

POLINATIONS, MOTHER TREE STAGE **1XTRA**
19:00 – 19:30

In association with BBC 1Xtra, BBC Contains Strong Language presents the Words First Reading, celebrating the most talented poets and spoken word artists aged 18-30 from across the UK. Voices past and present will appear as special guests at the reading including 2022's finalists.



FRED D'AGUIAR AND LINTON KWESI JOHNSON
FEATURE PERFORMANCE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
19:00 – 20:00
Hosted by Roy McFarlane, this must-see reading accompanied by Sisters in Dub will be a lively celebration of the work of these two giants of poetry.

THE VERB: LAUREL PRIZE SPECIAL

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
20:30 – 21:30

Radio 3's cabaret of the word. Ian McMillan shares poems and conversation with Linton Kwesi Johnson, Romalyn Ante, Isabelle Baafi, Luke Kennard and the recently announced winner of the Laurel Prize for environmental writing.



SOWETO KINCH: WHITE JUJU

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
20:30 – 22:00

'White Juju' is a live musical performance written in response to the Black Lives Matter movement, Black British History and lockdown by saxophonist and rapper Soweto Kinch (Mercury Prize Nominated).

SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER



RADIO 3 BREAKFAST
WITH ELIZABETH ALKER

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO
07:00 – 09:00

For the perfect start to your festival day join Elizabeth Alker on-air for Saturday Breakfast. A laid-back, expansive classical soundtrack will ease you into the morning. Plus, as you might expect from CSL, you'll hear quirky extras like French chanson and offbeat recordings alongside festival interviews and news.



BBC WRITERSROOM SESSION:
WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE**
10:00 – 11:00

Ever wondered how to get noticed by the BBC as a writer? BBC Writersroom is always on the look-out for fresh talented writers across the UK and ROI with an original voice, unique characters and great stories to tell. Join Usman Mullan who'll provide you with information on how to submit your scripts, our variety of schemes as well as some top scriptwriting tips.

SCARLETT WARD WORKSHOP
SPACE & SPACE - THE INFINITY OF A BLANK PAGE.

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM **CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE**
10:30 – 12:30
£15/£10

How can we as Poets approach the examination of both Space as in the galactic, and the space which occupies the small gaps or silences in between the spoken and unspoken, through the relationship between word and page?



BBC WORDS FIRST READING

POLINATIONS, MOTHER TREE STAGE **1XTRA**
11:00 – 11:30

In association with BBC 1Xtra, BBC Contains Strong Language presents the Words First Reading, celebrating the most talented poets and spoken word artists aged 18-30 from across the UK. Voices past and present will appear as special guests at the reading including 2022's finalists.



FREE THINKING
WITH MATTHEW SWEET

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
11:00 – 12:00

Matthew Sweet presents an episode of Radio 3's Arts and Ideas programme looking at the identity of The Black Country past and present. His guests are: the poet Liz Berry, linguist Dr Esther Asprey, artist and producer Dawinder Bansal and historian Simon Briercliffe.



PODIUM POETS TRIPLES

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PWC ROOM
12:00 – 12:30; 16:15 – 16:45; 18:45 – 19:15

The calibre of our Contains Strong Language poets is second to none. Catch them performing throughout the day in our Podium Poets space in handy clusters of three! Our 12:00-12:30 slot features Shivane Ramlochan (Trinidad), Dzifa Benson (UK) and Ellen Van Neerven (Australia) reading from their work. Our 16:15-16:45 slot features Kayo Chingonyi (UK), Alvin Pang (Singapore) and Efe Paul Azino (Nigeria) and our 18:45-19:15 slot welcomes Nick Makoha (UK), Njeri Wangari (Kenya) and Nafeesa Hamid (UK). These will be wonderful, energising shots of poetry.



VERVE PRESS 5TH BIRTHDAY

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE** **TICKETS TO LIVESTREAM AVAILABLE AT VERVEPOETRYFESTIVAL.COM**
13:00 – 14:00

VERVE Poetry Press is five years old this year! Help us celebrate at this colourful and lively event hosted by Luke Kennard and Brum Poet Laureate Casey Bailey and featuring one poet from each of our energetic publishing programme: Amerah Saleh (2018), Scarlett Ward Bennett (2019), Jemima Hughes (2020), Golnoosh Nour (2021) and Georgina Wilding (2022). We can't wait!

ACROSS BORDERS:
POETS LAND AT POLINATIONS

POLINATIONS, MOTHER TREE STAGE
13:00 – 14:00

Our Across Borders project, presented by Birmingham 2022 Festival, connected poets across the Commonwealth to create poetry in response to important questions: What should we learn from each other? What can we share? Join six of our poets sharing their experiences and their favourite poems from the resulting anthology. Featuring: Shivane Ramlochan (Trinidad), Nick Makoha (UK), Ellen Van Neerven (Australia), Efe Paul Azino (Kenya), Dzifa Benson (UK), Njeri Wangari (Nigeria).



CALLING THE SHOTS: ANIMATION WORKSHOP

POLINATIONS, WONDERSPHERE **CALLING THE SHOTS** **ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**
13:00 – 15:00

Aged 16-30? Spoken word artist or poet? Discover the creative impact of animation and explore ways to unleash the power of your words through visualisation. Led by animators Lily Mae Kroese and Ellie Land with help from finalists from the BBC Words First talent development scheme.

Strictly limited to 20 places. Booking essential.

ROMALYN ANTE WORKSHOP
LEGENDS & MYTHS IN MUNDANE LIFE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM **CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE** **TICKETS TO LIVESTREAM AVAILABLE AT VERVEPOETRYFESTIVAL.COM**
13:00 – 15:00
£15/£10

This workshop looks at the art of revising myths through poetry, exploring the approach taken by poets such as Fiona Benson, Jericho Brown and Leila Chatti. Learn to find the mythological in the mundane and use it to charge your poetry. You do not need to have an extensive knowledge of myths, just be willing to be surprised!



LANGUAGE IS A QUEER THING SHOWCASE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **TICKETS TO LIVESTREAM AVAILABLE AT VERVEPOETRYFESTIVAL.COM**
14:30 – 16:00

Our Language is a Queer Thing project - funded by British Council and in partnership with The Queer Muslim Project (India) - pairs three queer UK poets with three queer Indian poets in a project that explores their differing experiences and ask how language can be 'queered' to better reflect them. Join Amari Saeed (UK) and Megha Harish (India), Ife Grillo (UK) and Anil Pradhan (India), Sanah Ahsan (UK) and Garfield Dosouza (India) along with project partners TQMP and workshopers Saradha Soobrayan and Kostya Tzolakis as we launch our colourful pamphlet of new work and give our guests from India a proper Brummie welcome!

SHIVANE RAMLOCHAN WORKSHOP
POETRY AS FEROCITY: WRITING YOUR TRUTH WITH RADICAL HONESTY

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM **ONLINE ALTERNATIVE AVAILABLE AT VERVEPOETRYFESTIVAL.COM**
15:30 – 17:30
£15/£10

What truths are your poems telling? If not for your poems, what truths would never be spoken at all? In this workshop, we'll chart a course for radical honesty in verse, finding stronger roots for your poems to anchor themselves. We'll focus on work by female Caribbean poets Danielle Boodoo-Fortune and Safiya Sinclair, drawing on the powerful subversion in their writing to unlock our ability to tell the truth our poems require.

This workshop will involve discussion of potentially triggering content and strong language.

BBC 1XTRA: WORDS FIRST TALENT
SHOWCASE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **1XTRA**
17:00 – 18:30

BBC Contains Strong Language and BBC 1Xtra present the Words First Talent Showcase celebrating the most talented poets and spoken word artists aged 18-30 from across the UK. Special guests include BBC 1Xtra's Swarzy and Words First finalists 2022.

PREMIERE OF BBC WORDS FIRST
ANIMATIONS

POLINATIONS, WONDERSPHERE **CALLING THE SHOTS** **BBC ARTS**
19:00 – 19:30

Come and join the finalists of the BBC Words First talent development scheme for young spoken word artists as they perform their poems live to specially commissioned films by emerging animators. The Poets are Annaliese Broughton, Billie Meredith, Charlie Staunton, Eve Atkinson, Indra Toussaint and Nana Yaa Adu. The Animators are Adeline Court, Gabriela Bran, Dan Smedley, Jess Mountfield and Inez Skilling.



THE VERB:
APPLES & SNAKES 40TH CELEBRATION

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO **3**
19:30 – 21:30

This special edition of The Verb, hosted by Ian McMillan, celebrates the contribution and impact Black poets have had on shaping the UK spoken word poetry scene over the past 40 years. Featuring poetry legend Benjamin Zephaniah, 90's superstar Salena Godden and Birmingham Poet Laureate Casey Bailey with Kayo Chingonyi, Muneera Pilgrim, Roy MacFarlane & Ife Grillo.



JASMINE GARDOSI: DANCING TO MUSIC YOU HATE

POLINATIONS, MAIN STAGE
20:30 – 22:00

Jasmine Gardosi is an award-winning spoken word poet, beatboxer and multiple slam champion of national and international renown. Prepare for an hour of explosive dubstep bass-lines and soaring folk violin which blow apart the boundaries of gender and musical genre alike.

FLIP TO THE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE
AMAZING CSL EVENTS!



BBC CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE

BBC CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE

POETRY & PERFORMANCE 8TH-11TH SEPT 2022 BIRMINGHAM

BBC Contains Strong Language 2022 is a partnership between the BBC, VERVE Poetry Festival and Birmingham 2022 and is supported by Arts Council England, the British Council and Pol Nations.

Tickets for all events are available from Birmingham Hippodrome at www.birminghamhippodrome.com/containsstronglanguage

Many of our events are FREE to attend but please book your seat to ensure availability. Spaces on workshops are very limited.

bbc.co.uk/containsstronglanguage
#containsstronglanguage



THE CSL POETS

RESIDENT FOR CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE 2022, OUR CSL POETS WILL BRING YOU NEW AND EXISTING POETRY, AND WILL BE INVOLVED IN EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL



ROMALYN ANTE

is a Filipino-British, Wolverhampton-based author. She is co-founding editor of harana poetry and founder of Tse with Roma, an online interview series. Her debut collection is *Antiemetic for Homesickness* (Chatto & Windus).



EFE PAUL AZINO

is one of Nigeria's best-known performance artists and poets. He is co-founder and director of the Lagos International Poetry Festival and author of the poetry collection *For Broken Men Who Cross Off* (Roving-Heights Books).



ISABELLE BAAFI

is the Reviews Editor at *Poetry London*. Her debut pamphlet *Ripe* (Ignitionpress, 2020) won a Somerset Maugham Award and was a PBS Pamphlet Choice. Her writing has been published in *The Poetry Review*, *The London Magazine*, *Aesthetica Magazine*, and elsewhere.



DZIFA BENSON

is a Ghanaian-British multi-disciplinary artist whose work intersects science, art, the body and ritual. A widely published poet whose most recent publication is *More Fiya* (Canongate, 2022). Dzifa has an MA in Text & Performance from Birkbeck and RADA.



LIZ BERRY

published her first collection, *Black Country* in 2014, receiving a Somerset Maugham Award, the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Award & Forward Prize for Best First Collection. Her latest collection is *The Dereliction* (Hercules Editions, 2021).



KAYO CHINGONYI

is a Zambian-British poet, writer, editor, and broadcaster. His first collection, *Kumukanda*, won the Dylan Thomas Prize and a Somerset Maugham Award. His memoir, *Prodigal*, is forthcoming from 4th Estate.

SUNDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER



BBC RADIO CLUB

POLINATIONS, WONDERSPHERE 10:30 – 12:00

Join us for BBC Radio Club, in partnership with Creative Lives, and hear poems written and performed by young West Midlands Poets. Coventry Poet Laureate Emilie Lauren Jones has been working with schools across the West Midlands to produce poetry for BBC Local Radio on themes of growth, plants, seeds and the environment. This is a chance to hear fresh talent share their work.

DZIFA BENSON WORKSHOP THE GIFT

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM 10:30 – 12:30 £15/£10

Gifts are often objects that are loaded with emotional weight and memory – the kind that can engender powerful lyric poetry, anchored in concrete detail. This workshop aims to harness the power of gift-giving and –receiving to enable writers to render familiar objects as fresh and surprising stimulus for uncommon poetry.



CERYS MATTHEWS: LIVE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO 11:30 – 13:00

Cerys brings her regular Poet Tree feature to a live audience at the BBC's Contains Strong Language in Birmingham, discussing their influences, inspiration and the relationship between poetry and lyrics. With special guest, Benjamin Zephaniah.



FRED D'AGUIAR

is a British-Guyanese poet, playwright and novelist. He has authored eight poetry books and five novels, including the award-winning *The Longest Memory*. His collection, *Letters to America* was a Poetry Book Society Choice.



TISHANI DOSHI

publishes poetry, essays and fiction. Her book *Girls Are Coming Out of the Woods*, was shortlisted for the Ted Hughes Award. *A God at the Door* (Bloodaxe), her 4th collection of poems, was shortlisted for the Forward Poetry Prize 2021.



NAFEESA HAMID

is a writer of poetry and plays, workshop facilitator, performer and creative producer. She was born in Pakistan, bred in Birmingham. Her debut poetry collection *Besharam* (2018, Verve Poetry Press) was highly commended in the Forward Prizes 2017.



LINTON KWESI JOHNSON

is an award-winning reggae poet born in Jamaica, who came to London in 1963. In the 1970s he was in the Black Panthers and worked at the Keswick Centre, the first home of black theatre and art. His first poetry collection, *Voices of the Living and the Dead*, came out in 1974.



NICK MAKOHA

is the founder of The Obsidian Foundation. Winner of the 2021 Ivan Juritz prize and the Poetry London Prize. In 2017, his debut collection, *Kingdom of Gravity*, was shortlisted for the Felix Dennis Prize.



ROY MCFARLANE

is a Poet, Playwright and former Youth & Community Worker born in Birmingham of Jamaican parentage. His work has been nominated for the Ted Hughes Award and Jhalak Prize. His third collection *Living by Troubled Waters* is forthcoming.

OTHER POETS AND ARTISTS INCLUDE:

- NANA YAA ADU
- DR ESTHER ASPREY
- EVE ATKINSON
- CASEY BAILEY
- HINEMOANA BAKER
- DAVINDER BANSAL
- GABRIELLA BRAN
- SIMON BRIERCLIFFE
- ANNALIESE BROUGHTON
- ELENA KARINA BYRNE
- OLIVIA CHANEY
- XHOSA COLE
- ADELINA COURT
- SUJANA CRAWFORD
- OLGA DERMOTT-BOND
- ISABEL GALLEYMORE
- JASMINE GARDOSI
- SALENA GODDEN
- SAM J GRUDGINGS
- SISTERS DUB

PLOT 17 APPLES AND SNAKES

PLOT 17
A HIP-HOP GARDEN POETRY PROJECT FOR AUDIENCES AGED 7+

APPLES AND SNAKES

This workshop explores how embracing the unknown can challenge our preconceptions and certainties, allowing for contradictions, tensions and paradoxes. Through group discussions, writing prompts and a close reading of Adrienne Rich's poem 'Diving into the Wreck', we will reassess our own ways of seeing and being in poetry.

POLINATIONS MAIN STAGE 12:00 – 13:00; 14:00 – 15:00

PLOT17 is a mobile block party travelling the world raising awareness, inspiring action and spreading the message of "making things green", with a soundtrack guaranteed to make you want to plant a tree and sure to help the seeds grow. Using spoken word, lyrics, visuals and DJ-ing, PLOT17 is an interactive performance for ages 7 – 11.

KOSTYA TSOLAKIS WORKSHOP LANGUAGE IS A QUEER THING

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM 13:00 – 15:00 £15/£10

In this session, Kostya will guide you through the labyrinth of possibilities when translating queer experiences across borders and between languages. Are there 'untranslatable' words? Can we translate non-English queer language while retaining its charge? What can learn from other armfolds that deal with this issue? And how can we apply historical and personal experiences of rejection and division to queer expression of joy and self-discovery?

BBC THE VERB

THE VERB: ACROSS BORDERS/LANGUAGE IS A QUEER THING CELEBRATION

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO 14:00 – 15:00

Ian McMillan talks to the poet Fred D'Aguiar and others who have been taking part in two CSL projects: Across Borders, which connects poets in Commonwealth countries and Language is a Queer Thing, which looks at how poets in India and the UK use language to communicate the queer experience.



ALVIN PANG

is a poet, writer, editor, translator and researcher. His books include bestselling *What Gives Us Our Names* (2011) and *Uninterrupted time* (2019). He received Singapore's Young Artist of the Year Award and the JCI Education Award.



SHIVANE RAMLOCHAN

is a Trinidadian writer. Her debut collection was a finalist for the People's Choice T&T Book of the Year, and shortlisted for the 2018 Forward Prize for Best First Collection. Her second book, *Unkillable*, is forthcoming from Noemi Press in 2023.



SARADHA SOOBRAAYEN

is a creative activist working with poetry, visual arts and live arts. Her latest, *My Spoken Words*, her poetry, has appeared in *Badliisha Poetry*, *The East African*, *Kwani* & *Msafrir*. She has performed at the Kwani & Story Moja Festivals and the Global Voices Summits.



KOSTYA TSOLAKIS

is a London-based poet, born and raised in Athens, Greece. He is founding editor of harana poetry, the online magazine for poets writing in English as a second or parallel language. His pamphlet, *Epebos*, is out with Ignitionpress.



NJERI WANGARI

is an acclaimed Kenyan poet and spoken word artist. The author of *Mines & Mind fields*, *My Spoken Words*, her poetry, has appeared in *Badliisha Poetry*, *The East African*, *Kwani* & *Msafrir*. She has performed at the Kwani & Story Moja Festivals and the Global Voices Summits.



BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH

was one of the pioneers of the performance poetry scene in Britain. He has spent most of his life performing around the world in schools, universities, concert halls, and other public spaces. He is also an actor, TV & radio presenter, and novelist, who has written over 20 books.

- EMILIE LAUREN JONES
- LILY WAE KROESE
- SONNET LARBE
- ELLIE LAND
- GLYN NAXWELL
- BILLIE HEREDITH
- JESS MOUNTFIELD
- ISHAM NULLAN
- ELLEN VAN NEEVERN
- BOHDAN PIASECKI
- MUNEERA PILGRIM
- HELTZARANI T. SELVA
- ELFIE SHIOSAKI
- INEZ SKILLING
- DAN SMEDLEY
- CHARLIE STAUNTON
- SWARZY
- INDIRA TOUSSAINT
- RICHARD VINEN
- KIT DE WALL
- LUKE WRIGHT

SARADHA SOOBRAAYEN WORKSHOP THE CURIOSITY TOOLKIT: THE ART OF UNKNOWING IN POETRY

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, WORKSHOP ROOM 15:30 – 17:30 £15/£10

"...poems are like dreams: in them you put what you don't know you know." Adrienne Rich
This workshop explores how embracing the unknown can challenge our preconceptions and certainties, allowing for contradictions, tensions and paradoxes. Through group discussions, writing prompts and a close reading of Adrienne Rich's poem 'Diving into the Wreck', we will reassess our own ways of seeing and being in poetry.

INDIA:UK EXCHANGE POETS LAND AT POLINATIONS

POLINATIONS, MOTHER TREE STAGE 16:00 – 17:00

Our Language is a Queer Thing project - funded by British Council and in partnership with The Queer Muslim Project (India) - pairs three queer UK poets with three queer Indian poets in a project that explores their differing experiences and ask how language can be 'queered' to better reflect their. Join Amani Saeed (UK) and Megha Harish (India), Ife Grillo (UK) and Anil Pradhan (India), Sanah Ahsan (UK) and Garfield Dsouza (India) as they read samples of their new work in the beating heart of Pol Nations!



CSL LIVE

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO 16:30 – 17:00

Join a live Radio 4 broadcast as Poet Luke Wright explores the city of Birmingham with some of the poets who have been inspired by it. Featuring Liz Berry and Roy McFarlane.

CLOSING POETRY PARTY!

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PWC ROOM 17:30 – 19:15

The calibre of our CSL poets is second to none. And this is your last chance to hear from some of them. Help us wrap up our full and lively festival programme with final readings from Shivane Ramlochan (Trinidad), Nick Makoha (UK), Dzifa Benson (UK), Isabelle Baafi (UK), Kostya Tsolakis (UK) and Njeri Wangari (Nigeria). Plus, join the party by taking to the open mic!

OUR LANGUAGE IS A QUEER THING POETS



SANAH AHSAN

is an award-winning poet, clinical psychologist, presenter, and educator. She won the Outspoken Poetry Performance Prize and was recently shortlisted for the Bridport Prize, and longlisted for the National Poetry Competition and Frontier Poetry Prize 2021.



GARFIELD DSOUZA

has worked as a writer, editor, instructional designer, and English teacher for more than 20 years. He's has recently completed a season of *About What You Say*, a podcast about words, their origins, usage, and makeover.



IFE GRILLO

is a writer, producer, performer, and educator. He is a National Finalist for Hammer & Tongue and Roundhouse Youth Slam and won the UK University National Poetry Championships in 2020. Their poetry show, *Ode to Hercules*, was part of the 2019 UK Young Artist Festival.



MEGHA HARISH

is a queer writer of poetry and prose from Bangalore. They have been on the BYP programme, and their work has been published on a range of platforms including *Notes* (Cambridge), *Queerab's Tilt*, *Gaysi*, and *The Life of Science*.



ANIL PRADHAN

is a PhD candidate and Senior Research Fellow at Jadavpur University, Kolkata. In poetry, he has been able to learn and tell how finding home and celebrating one's queerness can be synonymous. His first collection was *fitting oddments* (2020).



AMANI SAEED

is an international writer who is the curator and host of of sell-out nights Golden Tongue and hen-nah party. Her debut collection, *Spirit*, was published by Burning Eye Books in 2018. Amani is currently working on the film *Queer Parivaar*.



LUKE WRIGHT PERFORMANCE

POLINATIONS, MAIN STAGE 18:00 – 19:00

Luke Wright is adept at taking poetry places it doesn't normally go. His poems can be tender, riotous, caustic and romantic and he delivers them with the ferocity and panache of a raconteur at the top of his game. This is an ALL-NEW show for 2022, deliciously funny poems set against a backdrop of pandemic politics, ageing parents, and an endless droning culture war.

BBC WORDS AND MUSIC 3

WORDS & MUSIC

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PATRICK STUDIO 20:00 – 22:00

A journey of discovery through the realms of Joy and Sorrow: Words and Music weaves together poetry and prose read by leading actors, with live music from acclaimed folk singer Olivia Chaney, and Birmingham based BBC Young Jazz Musician of the year saxophonist Xhosa Cole.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TICKETS HEAD TO WWW.BIRMINGHAMHIPPODROME.COM/CONTAINSSTRONGLANGUAGE

VERVE POETS



LUKE KENNARD

is a poet and novelist living in Birmingham. His award-winning catalogue includes 6 poetry collections and 2 novels. Most recently, *Notes on the Sonnets*, a sequence of poems responding to Shakespeare's sonnets won the Forward Prize for Best Collection 2021.



JEMIMA HUGHES

is a multi-slam winner and runner up in the 2020 UK Slam. Her work emphasises mental health awareness and covers taboo subjects such as sexual violence, and suicide. Her collection *Unorthodox* was published by Verve Poetry Press in 2020.



GOLNOOSH NOUR

was born in Tehran. She studied English Literature at Shahid Ghaemsi University, and did a PhD in Literature and Creative Writing at Birkbeck. Her second poetry collection *Rocksong* was published by Verve Poetry Press in 2021.



AMERA SALEH

is a spoken word artist born and bred from Birmingham. She is the Co-Founder of Verve Poetry Press. Amira has performed all around Europe and has released her first collection *I Am Not From Here* in April 2018.



SCARLETT WARD BENNET

is a West Midlands poet whose debut collection *ache* – published by Verve Poetry Press in 2019 – has been nominated for a 2020 Forward Poetry Prize. She has since founded her own poetry press, Fawn Press.



GEORGINA WILDING

was Nottingham's first Young Poet Laureate 2017-2019 and was Creative Director of Nottingham Poetry Festival until 2021. In 2015 she set up Mud Press. Her collection *Hagstone* was published by Verve this year.

CSL/VERVE INDIE POETRY PRESS BOOKFAIR

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME, PWC ROOM SUNDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER 10:30 - 16:00

CURATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BIRMINGHAM 2022 FESTIVAL

FEATURING BOOKS FROM: ARC PUBLICATIONS, BAD BETTY PRESS, BROKEN SLEEP BOOKS, CARCANET, PEEPAL TREE, PENNED IN THE MARGINS, POETRY BUSINESS, SEREN, VERVE POETRY PRESS & WRECKING BALL PRESS

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