

Writing Welsh Environments: Changing Climates

AWWE Conference 12 – 14 May 2023

Speaker Biographies

Keynotes

Matthew Jarvis, Aberystwyth University / University of Trinity Saint David

Matthew Jarvis is Professor and Anthony Dyson Fellow in Poetry at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, and Deputy Head of the Graduate School at Aberystwyth University. As a literary critic, he writes mainly on developments in Welsh poetry in English since the 1960s. As a poet, he contributes to innovative transdisciplinary work – such as projects on anxiety, multispecies politics, and taste-perception of insect-based foods.

Michelle Deininger, Cardiff University

Dr Michelle Deininger is Co-ordinating Lecturer in Humanities within the Division of Lifelong Learning at Cardiff University where she manages a wide portfolio of courses for adults and teaches modules that mostly seem to be about the end of the world. Since completing her PhD at Cardiff in 2013 on the topic of Welsh women's short fiction, Michelle has published in the fields of ecofeminism, ecogothic, and environmental young adult (YA) fiction, as well as more broadly on the short story.

Current publications include two contributions to the Routledge Handbook of Literature and Ecofeminism (2022), focusing on Welsh ecofeminist writing and the contemporary environmental YA novel respectively. Most recently, she has contributed a chapter on ecofeminism, activism and Welsh publishing contexts to the *Routledge Companion to Literature and Feminism* (due out in 2023). Forthcoming work explores the work of environmental activist Rachel Carson (*The Handbook of Ecofeminism*, 2023/24) and trans YA fiction (*Routledge Handbook of Trans Literature*, 2023/24). Michelle is currently a member of the Advisory Board for Lexington Books' Ecocritical Theory and Practice series and is working on a book provisionally entitled *Code Red for Humanity: Environmental Catastrophe in Young Adult Fiction*.

Jannat Ahmed, Lucent Dreaming

Jannat Ahmed is a MA English Literature graduate from Barry in the Vale of Glamorgan. She has made a significant contribution to publishing in Wales, co-founding Lucent Dreaming, an inclusive publishing company which is supportive of contributors who have historically been neglected by, or excluded from, traditional publishing.

Jannat's commitment to helping others discover routes into publishing and writing stem from her own experiences as a young woman of colour from a working-class background starting out as a writer.

To create an environment that is inclusive and supportive is Jannat's vision and she has turned pervasive discriminatory experiences such as cultural and financial barriers into positive, inclusive, and nurturing working methods for herself and others at Lucent Dreaming, at *Poetry Wales*, and through her teaching and mentoring work.

Jannat's dedication and contribution to publishing in Wales has been wide-ranging, from her own development and employment, to working to advance the talents of new writers and editors. This includes her roles as tutor at Cardiff University teaching creative writing and digital publishing and acting as a mentor with Cardiff University's Enterprise Team supporting students to set up creative businesses.

Speakers

Jane Aaron

Emeritus Professor of English at the University of South Wales, Jane Aaron's publications include the monographs *A Double Singleness: Gender and the Writings of Charles and Mary Lamb* (1991); *Pur fel y Dur: Y Gymraes yn Llên Menywod y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Bymtheg* (1998), which won the 1999 Ellis Griffith prize; *Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing in Wales* (2007), winner of the 2009 Roland Mathias Award; *Welsh Gothic* (2013), and the co-authored *Welsh Writing in English 1536-1914*, vol. 3, *The Oxford Literary History of Wales* (2020). She is also editor of *Welsh Women's Classics*, a reprint series published by the feminist press Honno.

Julie Brominicks

After undertaking a Japanese Government scholarship to research the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in Japan (to and from which she travelled by train) Aberystwyth University graduate and teacher Julie Brominicks taught sustainability at the Centre for Alternative Technology to a range of audiences across Wales. Since leaving to become a writer in 2012 she has written for journals such as *Welsh Agenda*, *New Welsh Review* and *Country Walking*, and has been a regular contributor to *BBC Countryfile Magazine*. Writing largely but not exclusively about the Welsh landscape, she aims to raise awareness of Welsh issues and language and sustainable living - environmental integrity underpins her life and writing. Her first book, the travelogue *The Edge of Cymru* was published by Seren in 2022.

Kirsti Bohata, Swansea University

Kirsti Bohata is Professor of English Literature and co-Director of CREW at Swansea University

Francesca Brooks, University of York

Francesca Brooks is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of York with the Department of English and Related Literature. She is currently working on a project exploring the medieval modernism of Welsh women writers including Brenda Chamberlain and Lynette Roberts. Her first book, *Poet of the Medieval Modern: Reading the Early Medieval Library with David Jones*, was published by OUP in 2021.

Jasmine Donahaye, Swansea University

Jasmine Donahaye's work has appeared in the New York Times and The Guardian, and her documentary, *Statue No 1*, was broadcast on BBC Radio 4. Her books include the memoir, *Losing Israel* (2015), winner of the nonfiction category in the Wales Book of the Year award; a biography of author Lily Tobias, *The Greatest Need* (2015), the basis for *O Ystalyfera i Israel*, broadcast by S4C; the cultural study *Whose People? Wales, Israel, Palestine* (2012), and two collections of poetry: *Misappropriations* (2006) and *Self-Portrait as Ruth* (2009). She is a part-time professor of Creative Writing at Swansea University, and a fellow of the Learned Society of Wales. Jasmine won the New Welsh Writing Awards in 2021 with an extract from *Birdsplaining*.

Dr Ben Gwalchmai, University of South Wales

Dr Ben Gwalchmai is Lecturer at the University of South Wales, a writer, an activist, and the campaign lead in the Campaign for a National Poetry Library of Wales. He was born on the border.

Bernadette Horton, Bangor University

I am a mature postgraduate student at Bangor University, and mother of four sons, the youngest of whom is autistic. I was born in Gloucestershire, after my Irish grandmother, married to my Welsh grandfather and living in Tonypany, removed the family from the valleys area, as the landscape depressed her, to a more rural area of Gloucester where my mother was brought up, losing her Welsh identity. I always had a natural affinity with Wales and moved my family to North Wales in 2004. The North Walian coast has been our home for 19 years.

Amy Le Gry, Bath Spa University

Amy Le Gry is a second year PhD student at Bath Spa University in the Environmental Humanities. Her PhD focuses on a collection of mountain literature (1930-1955) that re-imagines the mountain landscapes of Britain through their discussions on aesthetics, place and nationhood, literary influences and tackling of "Nature". Amy is an assistant editor for the *Green Letters Journal*. Amy holds a BA in English Literature from Aberystwyth University and a Masters in Critical Theory and Cultural Studies from the University of Nottingham. Outside of academia, Amy is a keen walker, fell runner and alpine skier. She lives in her home city of Cardiff.

David T Lloyd, Le Moyne College

Poet, fiction writer, and translator David Lloyd is the author of eleven books, including four poetry collections: *The Everyday Apocalypse* (2002), *The Gospel According to Frank* (2009), *Warriors* (2012) and *The Body's Compass*, forthcoming from Salmon Poetry, Ireland. He published three works of fiction: *Boys: Stories and a Novella* (2004), *Over the Line* (a novel, 2013), and *The Moving of the Water* (stories, 2018). His edited anthologies include *Imagined Greetings: Poetic Engagements with R. S. Thomas*, *Other Land: Contemporary Poems on Wales and Welsh-American Experience*, *Writing on the Edge: Interviews with Writers and Editors of Wales*, and *The Urgency of Identity: Contemporary English- Language Poetry from Wales*. In 2022 he received the inaugural Paula

Svonkin Creative Arts Award. He has received two Fulbright Scholar awards: in 2021 at Cardiff University, Wales, and in 2001 at Bangor University, Wales. In 2016 he received the M. Wynn Thomas Award for outstanding academic work in the field of Welsh Writing in English. In 2000, he received the Poetry Society of America's Robert H. Winner Memorial Award, judged by W. D. Snodgrass. He directs the Creative Writing Program at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, NY.

Robert Minhinnick, Cardiff University

Robert Minhinnick grew up near Bridgend and studied at the universities of Aberystwyth and Cardiff, then after working in an environmental field, co-founded Friends of the Earth (Cymru) and became the organisation's joint co-ordinator for some years. He is advisor to the charity, 'Sustainable Wales' and edits the international quarterly, Poetry Wales.

As well as being an active environmental campaigner, he is an essayist and poet, having published two collections of essays: *Watching the Fire Eater* (1992), winner of the 1993 Arts Council of Wales Book of the Year Award; and *Badlands* (1996), essays about post-communist Albania, California and the state of Wales and England. He has also edited *Green Agenda: essays on the environment of Wales* (1994). His book, *To Babel and Back*, was published in 2005 and won the 2006 Wales Book of the Year Award.

His poetry collections include *A Thread in the Maze* (1978); *Native Ground* (1979); *Life Sentences* (1983); *The Dinosaur Park* (1985); *The Looters* (1989); and *Hey Fatman* (1994). A *Selected Poems* was published by Carcanet in 1999, followed by *After the Hurricane* (2002) and *King Driftwood* (2008). In 2003, the same publisher issued his translations from the Welsh, *The Adulterer's Tongue: An Anthology of Welsh Poetry in Translation*. His debut novel, *Sea Holly*, was published in 2007, and shortlisted for the 2008 Ondaatje Prize.

His latest books of poetry include *The Keys of Babylon* (2011), shortlisted for the 2012 Wales Book of the Year Award, his *New Selected Poems* (2012), and *Diary of the Last Man* (2017), which was shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize.

Martha O'Brien, Cardiff University

Martha O'Brien is a third year PhD student studying at Cardiff University and Bristol University, funded by the SWW-DTP2. Her thesis reads contemporary Welsh writing in English through the lens of Derridean philosophy. Alongside her studies she is the co-founder and co-editor of Welsh literature and arts magazine, *Nawr*.

Huw Osborne, Royal Military College

Huw Osborne is Associate Professor in the department of English, Culture, and Communication at the Royal Military College, Kingston. He is the author, editor, or co-editor of four books, including *Rhys Davies* (University of Wales Press), *The Rise of the Modernist Bookshop: Books and the Commerce of Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Ashgate (2015/Routledge 2019), *Queer Wales: The History, Culture, and Politics of Queer Life in Wales* (University of Wales Press 2016), and *A Queer Square Mile: Queer Short Stories of Wales* (Parthian, 2022; with Kirsti Bohata and Mihangel Morgan).

Tomos Owen, Cardiff University

Tomos Owen is a lecturer in the School of English, Communication and Philosophy at Cardiff University.

Linden Peach, PhD supervisor School of Traditional Arts

Linden Peach has published several books on Welsh writing in English including studies of Emyr Humphries and pacifism in modern literature and most recently *Animals, Animality and Controversy in Modern Welsh Literature and Culture* (all from UWP). He is currently working on a study of new perspectives on the writings of Gillian Clarke.

Luke Peterson, Brigham Young University

Luke Peterson worked for fifteen years to advance sustainability and sound climate policy with local and state governments across the USA. A graduate of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a former lecturer in political science, he is now pursuing a master's degree in literature as he makes a mid-career shift to environmental humanities.

Jim Pratt

Retired forest pathologist, Scotland. MBE 2002. Margiad Evans' nephew. Edited her *Ray of Darkness and Nightingale Silenced* for Honno 2020/2022. Several essays on her in NWR. Editing book of her letters.

Mererid Puw Davies, UCL

Mererid Puw Davies is Professor of German Studies at University College London (UCL), where she teaches German and comparative literature, film and cultural studies. She has published widely on German-language literature, film and culture, including the monographs *The Tale of Bluebeard in German Literature from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* and *Writing and the West German Protest Movements: The Textual Revolution*, and the co-edited volumes *Autobiography by Women in German and Medical Humanity and Inhumanity in the German-Speaking World*.

Mererid is also an essayist and poet in Welsh, a Contributing Editor of the journal *O'r Pedwar Gwynt* and a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales.

Sophie Squire, Aberystwyth University

I am a PhD Creative Writing student at Aberystwyth University. My research area is science fiction and the Anthropocene. Specifically, the pedagogical value of short-form climate fiction in the climate crisis. The interdisciplinary nature of my research is something I find important in the teaching and learning of the climate crisis.

I am very interested in the way that art and science fiction can make literature and science more accessible and entertaining!

Colin Thomas

I am a filmmaker and a writer of books ("Dreaming A City", "Indoctrinating for Imperialism") and apps ("The Dragon and the Eagle", "Picturing Our Past").

Laura Wainwright

Dr Laura Wainwright is the author of 'New Territories in Modernism: Anglophone Welsh Writing 1930-1949' (University of Wales Press, 2018) and 'Air and Armour' (Green Bottle Press, 2021).

Diana Wallace, University of South Wales

Diana Wallace is Professor of English Literature at the University of South Wales. She is the author of *Christopher Meredith* (2018), *Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History and the Gothic* (2013), and *The Woman's Historical Novel: British Women Writers, 1900-2000* (2005). She wrote the introduction to Margiad Evans's *Autobiography* for Honno's Welsh Women's Classics series.

Andy Webb, Bangor University

I am a Senior Lecturer in Modern Literature, specialising in two areas: the English-language literature of Wales; and Ecocriticism, specifically the cultural representation of climate change and the environment.