

CRITICAL POETICS: CARE OF...



Nottingham
Contemporary

The Critical Poetics Summer School 2021: Critical Poetics: Care Of...

*Times in BST (British Summer Time)

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent political, social and environmental crises have fundamentally changed the way that we perceive and experience care. As a result, the double-edged meaning of the term can be felt more sharply than ever; care encapsulates our attention and concern for someone or something at the same time as it defines our troubles, pains and sorrows. Moreover, taking care with our writing is an ethical and aesthetic imperative. In 2021, the Critical Poetics Summer School will be delivered care of a group of internationally recognised artists, writers and thinkers whose work addresses current and pressing issues of care and caring.

How has the global pandemic changed care? What does care now mean in light of the social injustices and inequalities foregrounded by Black Lives Matter? What does it mean to be charged with the care of animal, vegetal and mineral lifeforms during the sixth mass extinction and the care of the environment in the ongoing climate crisis? Furthermore, how has care, both as a concept and an experience, changed for writers, artists, critics and readers? Over the course of the 2021 summer school, we will explore these issues together, and in the process we will interrogate the degree to which writing, art, criticism, or a combination of these, can help us attend to manifold, interconnected and collective care responsibilities.

Coordinated in partnership with Nottingham Contemporary, the 2021 programme features a wide range of virtual activities – from one-to-one tutorials, to workshops and public events – tailored for interdisciplinary scholars, writers, artists and students. Participants will benefit from access to internationally renowned practitioners and thinkers and will be provided with time and resources to develop their own critical-creative practice. There will be opportunities to produce a publishable output as well as the chance to participate in a form of social action.

The 2021 edition of Summer School will be online. Workshops and one-to-one sessions will take place on Zoom (via QiqoChat). Public events will be streamed on YouTube. One-to-one session will be scheduled with our artist-in-residence, Maya Chowdhry, and members of the Critical Poetics Research Group.

Friday 25 June – Care in the Time of Covid

6.00-7.00pm – Welcoming remarks from the Critical Poetics Research Group

7.00-8.30pm – **Michael Rosen** reading from *Many Different Kind of Love*, plus discussion (public event)

Saturday 26 June – Social Action I

9.00am-1pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

1.00-5.00pm – **Maya Chowdhry**: artist-in-residence workshop I

7:00-8.30pm – Virtual social activity

Monday 28 June – Care in the Anthropocene

9.00-11.00am – **Craig Santos Perez**: poetry breakfast

11.00am-1.00pm – **Steve Mentz**: critical-creative workshop

1.00-5.00pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

7.00-8.30pm – **Astrida Neimanis**: keynote lecture on ‘Care in the Anthropocene’ (public event)

Tuesday 29 June – Care and Waiting

9.00am-1pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

1.00-5.00pm – **Laura Salisbury**: critical-creative workshop

7:00-8.30pm – **Marion Coutts** reading from *The Iceberg*, in discussion with **Laura Salisbury** (public event)

Wednesday 30 June – Inter-species Care

9.00am-1pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

1.00-5.00pm – **Maya Chowdhry** and **Mama D Ujuaje**: critical-creative workshop

7:00-8.30pm – **Maya Chowdhry** and **Mama D Ujuaje**: reading and performance, in discussion with **Eva Haifa Giraud** (public event)

Thursday 1 July – Troubling Care

9.00am-1pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

1.00-5.00pm – **Nat Raha**: critical-creative workshop

7:00-8.30pm – **Bhanu Kapil**, **Nat Raha** and **Raymond Antrobus**: poetry reading and discussion (public event)

Friday 2 July – Queering Care

9.00am-1pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

1.00-5.00pm – **Seán Hewitt**: critical-creative workshop

7:00-8.30pm – **Maggie Nelson** reading from *On Freedom: Four Songs of Care and Constraint*, plus discussion (public event)

Saturday 3 July – Social Action II

9.00am-1pm – One-to-one feedback slots and time to work on own material

1.00-5.00pm – **Maya Chowdhry**: artist-in-residence workshop II

7:00-8.30pm – Participant showcase and closing remarks

Instructors / Speakers 2021



Photo credit: Paul McLean

Raymond Antrobus was born in London to an English mother and Jamaican father. He is author of *The Perseverance*, *To Sweeten Bitter* and the children's picture book *Can Bears Ski?* illustrated by Polly Dunbar. In 2019 he was a recipient of the Ted Hughes Award and won the Sunday Times/University of Warwick Young Writer of the Year Award, and became the first poet to be awarded the Rathbone Folio Prize. His next poetry collection *All The Names Given* is published in September by Picador (UK) and Tin House (US).

Maya Chowdhry is a writer and a multidisciplinary artist. Her work explores issues such as seed sovereignty and climate justice. Maya's poetry collections are *The Seamstress and the Global Garment* and *Fossil*. She creates immersive and democratic live art experiences for participants, drawing from creating work in poetry, radio, video and installation. Recent work utilises the online space for transmedia storytelling and augmented reality artworks. Maya's award-winning writing includes 'Butterfly Orchid', highly commended in the Forward Poetry Prizes, 2017. 'Tales from the Towpath', an immersive story for Manchester Literature Festival, was shortlisted for the International New Media Writing Prize, 2014. 'Galvanising Change', an interactive audio installation which utilises sensors to examine climate change, is currently exhibited online with Digital Art Studios and The British Council.



Maya Chowdhry



Photo credit: Alice Rosenbaum

Marion Coutts is an artist and writer. Her work has been exhibited widely nationally and internationally, including solo shows at Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool, Chisenhale Gallery, London, Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Foksal Gallery, Warsaw. She has held fellowships at Tate Liverpool and Kettle's Yard, Cambridge and was a Rome Scholar at the British School at Rome. Her first book, *The Iceberg* won the Wellcome Book Prize in 2015. It was shortlisted for the Costa Book Award, the Samuel Johnson Prize and was a finalist in the US National Book Critics Circle Awards, 2017. In 2018 she was the recipient of *The Islands Arts Writing Residency*, Fogo Island, Canada. A new publication, *Pluton*, will come out with Art Metropole, Toronto in 2021. She is a Reader in Art at Goldsmiths College, University of London.



Photo credit: Sam Galantini

Eva Haifa Giraud is a Senior Lecturer in Media at Keele University. Her research has two strands. In empirical terms, she is interested in the ways that activists negotiate tensions associated with the media platforms they use, particularly the challenges posed by social media. Her work has engaged with this theme in the context of environmental, animal, and food activism, with more recent research focusing on anti-racist politics. She also has a broad conceptual interest in non-anthropocentric theoretical work, which explores ways of thinking and acting in the world that move beyond the treatment of (some) humans as exceptional. Her publications include *What Comes After Entanglement? Activism, anthropocentrism and an ethics of exclusion* (Duke University Press), *Veganism: Politics, Practice, and Theory* (Bloomsbury Academic) and articles in journals such as *Theory, Culture & Society*, *New Media & Society* and *Social Studies of Science*.

Seán Hewitt was born in 1990. He is a book critic for *The Irish Times* and teaches Modern British & Irish Literature at Trinity College Dublin. He won a Northern Writers' Award in 2016, the Resurgence Prize in 2017, and an Eric Gregory Award in 2019. In 2020, he was chosen by *The Sunday Times* as one of their '30 under 30' most promising artists in Ireland, and his debut collection, *Tongues of Fire*, was shortlisted for *The Sunday Times* Young Writer of the Year Award, 2020. His book *J.M. Synge: Nature, Politics, Modernism* is published with Oxford University Press (2021), and his memoir, *All Down Darkness Wide*, is forthcoming from Jonathan Cape in the UK and Penguin Press in the USA in 2022. He is currently the first poet-in-residence at the Irish Queer Archive, in partnership with National Library of Ireland and Cúirt International Literature Festival.



Photo credit: Bríd O'Donovan



Bhanu Kapil

Bhanu Kapil is the author of six full-length collections, most recently *How To Wash A Heart* (Pavilion Poetry), and *Incubation: a space for monsters* (Kelsey Street Press), forthcoming in a new edition with essays on performance and shame, and a preface by Eunsong Kim.

Steve Mentz is Professor of English at St. John's University in New York City. His recent writings include the books *Ocean* (2020) and *Break Up the Anthropocene* (2019), as well as multiple articles, chapters, and edited collections of scholarly essays. He also writes for public humanities venues such as *Public Books*, *Arcade*, *Hypocrite Reader*, and *The Glasgow Review of Books*. During the timeless time of Covid-19, he has redoubled his commitments to writing poetry, including with colleagues in the Sonnet Corona Project, which collaboratively wrote fourteen sonnet 'crowns' of fourteen linked poems each during 2020. His current projects include swim-poetry, an academic study of early modern 'wet globalization,' and a creative-critical project about *Moby-Dick* entitled, 'Sailing without Ahab.'



Photo credit: Olivia Mentz

Astrida Neimanis is a cultural theorist working at the intersection of feminism and environmental change. Her research focuses on bodies, water and weather, and how they can help us reimagine justice, care, responsibility and relation in the time of climate catastrophe. Her most recent book, *Bodies of Water: Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology*, is a call for humans to examine our relationships to oceans, watersheds and other aquatic life forms from the perspective of our own primarily watery bodies, and our ecological, poetic and political connections to other bodies of water. Often in collaboration with other researchers, writers, artists and scientists, Astrida's work features in academic publications, gallery exhibitions and catalogues, and as part of public workshops and events. Astrida recently joined UBC Okanagan on the unceded Syilx and Okanagan lands, in Kelowna, BC, Canada, as an Associate Professor in Ecofeminism and Environmental Humanities.



Photo credit: Lucy Parakhina

Maggie Nelson is the author of several books of poetry and prose, most recently *On Freedom: Four Songs of Care and Constraint* (2021). Other nonfiction titles include the *New York Times* bestseller and National Book Critics Circle Award winner *The Argonauts* (2015), *The Art of Cruelty: A Reckoning* (2011; a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year), *Bluets* (2009; named by *Bookforum* as one of the top 10 best books of the past 20 years), *The Red Parts* (2007), and *Women, the New York School, and Other True Abstractions* (2007). Her poetry titles include *Something Bright, Then Holes* (2007) and *Jane: A Murder* (2005; finalist for the PEN/ Martha Albrand Art of the Memoir). She has been the recipient of a MacArthur 'genius' Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, an NEA Fellowship, an Innovative Literature Fellowship from Creative Capital, and an Arts Writers Fellowship from the Andy Warhol Foundation. She currently teaches at USC and lives in Los Angeles.



Photo Credit Harry Dodge



Photo credit: Sarah Golightley

Nat Raha is a poet and activist-scholar, based in Edinburgh. She is the author of three collections and numerous pamphlets of poetry, including of *sirens, body & faultlines* (Boiler House Press, 2018), *countersonnets* (Contraband Books, 2013), *Octet* (Veer Books, 2010) and 'four dreams' (Earthbound Poetry Series, 2020). Her creative and critical writing has appeared in *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Third Text*, *Poetry Review*, *MAP Magazine*, *The New Feminist Literary Studies* (CUP, 2020), and in the 2020 anthologies *ON CARE* (MA Bibliothèque), *The Weird Folds: Anthropocene in the Everyday* (Dostoyevsky Wannabe), and *We Want It All: An Anthology of Radical Trans Poetics* (Nightboat Books). Her writing has been translated into French, Galician, German, Greek, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish and Slovenian. Nat is a Research Fellow on the project 'Life Support: Forms of Care in Art and Activism' at the University of St Andrews, which is opening an exhibition at Glasgow Women's Library in August. In 2018, she completed her PhD 'Queer Capital: Marxism in queer theory and post-1950 poetics' at the University of Sussex. Nat co-edits *Radical Transfeminism Zine*.

Michael Rosen is one of Britain's best loved writers and performance poets for children and adults. He is currently Professor of Children's Literature at Goldsmiths, University of London where he co-devised and teaches an MA in Children's Literature. Michael is also a popular broadcaster and has presented BBC Radio 4's acclaimed programme about language, 'Word of Mouth' since 1998, as well as regularly presenting documentary programmes for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio 3, including the Sony Gold Award-winning 'On Saying Goodbye'. Michael has published in the region of 200 books for children and adults and appears regularly at literary festivals all over the UK and Ireland. For outstanding contribution to children's literature he received the Eleanor Farjeon Award and was Children's Laureate 2007-2009. In recognition of his contribution to the profile of French culture in the UK, he was made Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.



Photo credit: M Kavanagh



Photo credit: Hannah Ensor

Craig Santos Perez is an indigneous Pacific Islander from Guam. He has edited five anthologies and authored five books of poetry and the monograph, *Navigating Chamoru Poetry: Indigeneity, Aesthetics, and Decolonization* (University of Arizona Press, 2021). He has received the American Book Award, the PEN Center USA/Poetry Society of America Prize, and the Hawai'i Literary Arts Council Award, as well as fellowships from the Lannan Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the American Council of Learned Societies. He is a Professor of English at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa, where he teaches Pacific Islander literature, creative writing, eco-poetry, and the environmental humanities.

Laura Salisbury is Professor of Modern Literature and Medical Humanities at the University of Exeter, where she works in the Department of English and Film and in the Wellcome Centre for the Cultures and Environments of Health. She has published widely in the field of modern and contemporary literature, in critical theory, and in medical humanities, particularly on the relationship between neuroscience and modernism and on time and care. Her books include: *Other Becketts* (with Daniela Caselli); *Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems* (with Andrew Shail); *Samuel Beckett: Laughing Matters, Comic Timing*, and *Kittler Now: Current Perspectives in Kittler Studies* (with Stephen Sale). Laura is currently co-PI with Lisa Baraitser from Birkbeck on a 5-year Wellcome-funded project called *Waiting Times*. This multi and interdisciplinary project examines what it means to wait in and for healthcare. She is President of the Samuel Beckett Society.



Laura Salisbury



Photo credit: Rt1styx.arts

Mama D Ujuaje is a Community Researcher and Facilitator whose background is in Food and Nourishment Practice and artistic advocacy around Food Justice. She currently curates, within Community Centred Knowledge, Learning Journeys, exploring the interfaces of community, modernity and systemic justice through the routes of art and culture. She uses embodied and action research methods to interrogate the interfaces of community and academic knowledge construction. She is interested in how humans navigate justice issues over time and space and manage personal and social trauma in embodied ways, across the territories of the Anthropocene. In traversing from the physiology to the psychology of nourishment, Mama D encourages storytelling and the coaxing out of withheld stories from a wide range of bodies, bringing them to the loom. She encourages each participant to pick up the threads and interweave with each other, even getting beneath the skin of the everyday. Mama D is an alchemist of the ordinary.