

PUSH

poetry

PUSH
THE BOAT
 OUT

THE

on

BOAT

your

Edinburgh's
International
Poetry Festival

20–23 November
+ pre-festival events

Pleasance

OUT

wavelength



pushtheboatout.org

@PTBOPoetry

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Contents

- 4 Introduction
- 5 Access
- 6 On the Horizon
- 7 Discover Fingal
- 8 Around the Festival
- 9 Thursday 20–Friday 21 November
- 11 Friday 21 November at a Glance
- 12 Saturday 22 November
- 18 Saturday 22 November at a Glance
- 19 Sunday 23 November
- 23 Sunday 23 November at a Glance
- 24 Development Day
- 24 ConVERSE
- 26 Online
- 27 About Push the Boat Out
- 27 Support Us

Events are colour coded by event type.



Discussion



Workshop



Performance



Exhibition



Music

PUSH THE BOAT OUT

All Aboard!

Push the Boat Out 2025 is here! This year's festival sets sail from 20-23 November with a bold mix of poetry, performance, music and art in a sparkling celebration of words in all their forms. With over 120 artists on board you can expect a packed weekend full of fresh voices, and stories and experiences that surprise, challenge and delight, all while capturing the messy, marvellous complexity of the world we share.

This year we're kicking off before the festival with a very special event featuring **Hollie McNish** and **Michael Pedersen** on Leith's iconic floating hotel, **The Fingal**, on 8 November. We'll also be giving you the chance to get into the festival spirit by joining **Marjorie Lotfi** for Open Book's Festival Reading Group featuring work from festival poets.

Most of the programme will take place at one of Edinburgh's most beloved festival venues, the Pleasance, We're excited to be working in such an inspiring venue, with its rich creative atmosphere and vibrant festival vibes. And if you need a breather between events you can take part in our treasure hunt or enjoy our Ian Hamilton Finlay centenary exhibition, and we'll be offering massages and tarot reading throughout the weekend! Find out more online.

Our 2025 themes dive into Poetry is Punk, a timely reminder that poetry can be raw, edgy, DIY and, importantly, for everyone; The Anthropocene explores the human-made marks on our planet and our bodies, while The Unseen World looks at belief, comfort and imagination beyond the everyday.

Alongside poetry, performances and conversations, we're proud to continue our engagement work with partners across the city including **SCOREScotland**, **Tinderbox Collective**, **Amnesty International UK** and the **Simon Community Scotland**. These programmes will give young people and adults the opportunity to explore how words can empower, connect and challenge. If you can't make it in person, we have a fantastic line up of online workshops and discussions and an expanded hybrid programme with five free live-streamed events and a full broadcast schedule with EHFM.

As always, we aim to support poets in a range of ways. If you are interested in a career as an artist do join us for our free Development Day on Friday where we'll be delving into how you can hone your skills and expand your portfolio.

Get in the boat, compañeros!


Access

We are committed to making Push the Boat Out as accessible as possible. Detailed accessibility information about each of our spaces can be found on our website in the Venue & Access section. A quiet room is also available.

Companion tickets are available for all events, please contact boxoffice@pushtheboatout.org to book.

To remove barriers to attendance we aim to keep tickets as affordable as possible. The programme includes 7 free events, a range of exhibitions, a festival treasure hunt and 12 Pay What You Can (PWYC) events with the lowest price point set at £0. We also have an excellent value Festival Pass offering free access to the majority of the programme.

For people who can't come to the festival in person, we offer an online programme, a number of live streamed events, and a programme of events free to listen to at home via our partners EHFM, online community radio station look out for a (()) . Full details can also be found online.

This year we are presenting a number of BSL interpreted events and these are indicated within the listings by this symbol  and listed below.



**Friday 21.
November**

**Words and Wine with
Leena Norms**



**Saturday 22
November**

Versus Versus

**In Conversation with
Len Pennie**

The Clearing



**Sunday 23
November**

Magma

**The Pleasures and
Power of Reading, with
Peter Mackay**

**Anthropocene – New
Poetic Performances**

on the horizon

Pre-festival

Tuesday 4 November &
Tuesday 18 November

Festival Reading Groups with Open Book

5pm (1hr)

- Online
- PWYC

Can't wait for Push the Boat Out? Get into the festival spirit by joining **Marjorie Lotfi**, poet and co-founder of Open Book, for an exploration of poetry from a handful of poets appearing at the festival. Expect to go away with new favourites! No homework or experience is required. Each group will explore different poets and you are welcome to book into either or both events.



Open Book

Saturday 8 November

Push the Boat Out and the Fingal Present: Hollie McNish and Michael Pedersen

6.45pm (1hr)

- Fingal Hotel
- £20/£15/£10 festival pass

In partnership with the Fingal Hotel, we are delighted to welcome you to a very special nautical experience. Join us on board this luxury floating venue for an exclusive festival warm up with Sunday Times bestseller, **Hollie McNish**, and prize-winning author and Edinburgh Makar, **Michael Pedersen**. Alongside lively discussion, Hollie and Michael will read from their new work: Hollie's much anticipated new collection *Virgin* and Michael's magical novel, *Muckle Flugga*.



FINGAL HOTEL



the spirit of the sea **Discover Fingal**



Fingal is a luxury floating hotel permanently berthed on Edinburgh's vibrant waterfront. A former Northern Lighthouse Board ship which has been transformed into an exquisite 22 cabin boutique hotel.

Tucked away on the top deck is the Lighthouse Restaurant - a beacon of culinary excellence.

From an exquisite afternoon tea to a seasonal dinner menu, each dish is meticulously prepared, bursting with flavour, created by the passionate Galley Team, led by Restaurant Chef Andrea Sendon Alonso and Head Chef Pedro Barreira.



the outer deck Around the festival

Ian Hamilton Finlay – The Arcadian Dream Garden

- Pentland
- free

Join us at a special exhibition to celebrate the Centenary of Ian Hamilton Finlay (1925–2006), one of Scotland's most distinctive and internationally recognised artists and poets. Known for his poetic, philosophical and often playful approach to art, Finlay is best known for his remarkable garden, Little Sparta. This exhibition allows us to celebrate that work beyond the boundaries of the garden.

Supported by the Estate of Ian Hamilton Finlay.

Tinderbox Collective: Playing Poetry

- Theatre Bar
- free

Come and try this playable game installation influenced by the poetry of Edwin Morgan and other technology-inspired poets. Created by young game designers from **Tinderbox Games Club** over two months, the work touches on themes of technology and poetry in various forms, and features art, audio, custom controllers, set, and story designed collaboratively by the group.



TINDERBOX

Temporary Autonomous Poetry Zone – A Flotsam Flourish

- Starting from Pleasance Reception
- free

More Fun With Games invite you to join us for a game of playful, palimpsest, poetic perambulations. A self-guided and paced immersive experience via our mobile web app for you to discover detritus and hidden gems. Unmoor yourself and drift on the currents of our Dérive, wander and wonder. Perhaps you might discover some prizes at the end of our treasure trail?

Calm Seas with Mobile Massage & Glow

- Theatre Bar
- free

Need a breather between events? Drop an anchor at the wellness corner and let Mobile Massage & Glow work their magic. Their expert therapists specialise in stress-busting seated massages, the quickest way to melt tension, recharge your energy, and sail smoothly through your weekend.

poetry on your w

Thursday & Friday

Thursday 20–Friday 21 November

Words that Burn: Schools Showcase

17:30 (1 hr) Thursday

- Main Theatre
- PWYC

Words that Burn is Amnesty International UK's flagship creative education programme, it aims to empower young people to explore and take action for human rights through poetry.

Hosted by **Imogen Stirling**, pupils from Leith Academy, Portobello High School and Boroughmuir High School will be sharing their poetry inspired by the project as they stand up for human rights.



Nancie Massie
Charitable Trust



Beyond the Margins

16:00 (1 hr) Friday

- Upper Hall
- PWYC

Join us to celebrate the launch of this brand-new poetry zine, and take home your own copy.

Created by the people supported by the Simon Community Scotland through Streetreads, a library and community for people experiencing homelessness in Edinburgh, the zine explores their hopes and stories. With performances from group members, alongside facilitators **Julie McNeill** and **Kevin Gilday**.

Refreshments provided.

With thanks to Typewronger Books.



Young Verses with SCOREScotland

17:00 (45 mins) Friday

- Lomond
- PWYC

Join the young people from Wester Hailes High School as they share poetry, spoken word, music and stories created with **Bee Asha** and **Lauren Bianchi** (PTBO) and **Davie Luhanga** (SCOREScotland). Expect flights of fantasy and tales of belonging, connection and identity.

Nancie Massie
Charitable Trust



Friday

Wrestling with Life: Nina Mingya Powles and Anthony V. Capildeo

17:00 (1 hr) Friday

- Main Theatre
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

In their recent collections, **Nina Mingya Powles** and **Anthony V. Capildeo** wrestle with life in our restless times. *In the Hollow of the Wave* by Nina examines orientalism, art and artmaking in a time of ecological crisis. In *Polkadot Wounds*, Anthony counterpoints untimely deaths with breakthroughs of joy, in queer and far-flung communities.

Chaired through the ConVERSE Emerging Chairs Programme with the University of Edinburgh.



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
School of Literatures,
Languages and Cultures

Words and Wine with Leena Norms



18:00 (1 hr) Friday

- Upper Hall
- £15/£12/£0 festival pass

Get into the festival mood with a tasting menu of poetry and wine! **Joe Trotter** from wine merchants *Great Grog* will take you through a tempting array of delectable wines, sharing each drink's story and history while you sip. A poetic pairing will be provided by poet, vlogger and presenter **Leena Norms**.



What Now?

20:00 (2 hrs) Friday

- Main Theatre
- £15/£12/£0 festival pass

A vibrant Friday night of theatre, spoken word and music brought to you by What Now? and Push the Boat Out.

Join playwrights **Hannah Lavery**, **Zinnie Harris** and **William Letford** for a series of newly commissioned theatre shorts offering an urgent response to the geopolitical cultural moment we're living through. With spoken word from **Anthony Anaxagorou** and music by **Carla J. Easton**.



your wavelength

Friday at a Glance



Discussion



Workshop



Performance



Development Day

	Upper Hall	Lomond	Main Theatre	Online
10.30-11	Start It Yourself	Words that Burn: Human Rights and Poetry Workshop		
11-11.30				
11.30-12				
12-12.30	How to Succeed as a Creative Freelancer			
12.30-13				
13-13.30				
13.30-14	Hosting Like a Pro	Words that Burn: Human Rights and Poetry Workshop		
14-14.30				
14.30-15				Translating into Different Places
15-15.30				
15.30-16				
16-16.30	Beyond the Margins			
16.30-17				
17-17.30		Young Verses with SCOREScotland	Wrestling with Life	
17.30-18				
18-18.30	Words and Wine			
18.30-19				
19-19.30				
19.30-20			What Now?	
20-20.30				
20.30-21				
21-21.30				
21.30-22				

Saturday

Saturday 22 November

Reimagining Home: Michael Mullen & Sree Sen

10:30 (1 hr)

- Cabaret Bar
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Reading from and discussing their debut collections, **Sree Sen** and **Michael Mullen** explore community, identity and questions of home.

Cracked Asphalt seeks to untangle the strings of guilt Sree found herself wrapped in after her move from Mumbai to Dublin, while Michael's *Goonie* considers how we form community and how community, in turn, forms us.



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

Takeover: Glasgow City of Poets

10:30 (1 hr)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join award-winning Scots poet **Keeks Mc** for a multimedia performance bringing together poetry, music and visual art, showcasing how personal experience is powerfully and poignantly conveyed through work with endangered languages. The Glasgow City of Poets collective will illustrate the cultural richness brought by diversity of language and the importance of language conservation.

Dramatic Readings: A Workshop with Cheryl Martin

10:30 (1 hr, 30 mins)

- Cheviot
- £25/£20/£10 festival pass

Cheryl Martin is a poet and theatre-maker. Her work spans a range of genres and artforms, and she has written and directed a number of award-winning plays. In this women-only workshop, led by Cheryl, we'll be exploring the intersections between theatre and poetry, and looking at techniques to help you create distinctive voices when writing poetry.

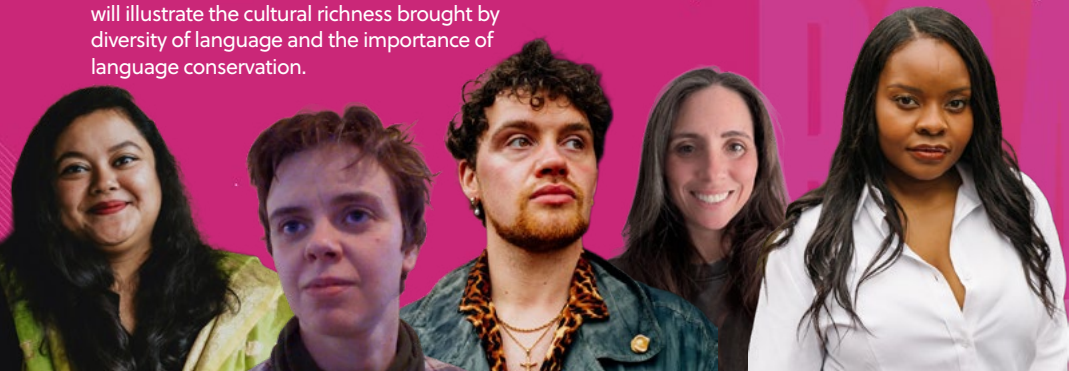
Holding On and Letting Go: Isabelle Baafi & Jessica Traynor

11:30 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join **Isabelle Baafi** and **Jessica Traynor** for poetry which explores relationships, grief and self-determination.

Framed by the story of escape from a toxic marriage, Isabelle's *Chaotic Good* asks how we are made, how we get lost and how we find new selves, while Jessica's *New Arcana* explores grief, bad boyfriends and the power of female friendship through readings of the Tarot and Tim Burton movies.





Versus Versus

12:30 (1 hr)

→ Upper Hall

→ PWYC

Building on the work of decades of disability justice advocacy, the anthology *Versus Versus*, edited by **Rachael Boast**, showcases 100 disabled, D/deaf and neurodivergent poets, offering a poetry of assertiveness and immense vitality.

Join poets **Polly Atkin**, **Pascale Petit** and **Nuala Watt** as they read their own poems from the anthology, as well as sharing related work.

Please wear a mask when attending.

An Open Book Tour of Scotland

11:30 (1 hr)

→ Lomond

→ PWYC

Join Open Book writers from across the country for an hour packed with humour, story-telling and words to make you think. You'll hear a mixture of individual work and collaborative poems responding to ideas such as *Envy*, *Obsolescence*, *The Road Less Travelled* and many more.



Open Book

Takeover: The Shore Poets

12:30 (1 hr)

→ Cabaret Bar

→ £12/£10/£0 festival pass

The Shore Poets are an informal but durable collective who have been providing a platform for poets since 1991. Each month, the collective showcases two poets alongside musicians, capping it all off with the legendary lemon cake raffle! Prepare to be dazzled by the brilliant eco-poetry of **Karen Solie** and **Tim Cresswell**, and groove to tunes from **The Self-Righteous Brothers**.

Perfume Consultations

13:00 (2 hrs)

→ Lomond

→ free

Inspired by literature, music and life events, Lush perfumes tell stories and evoke reactions. Drop by for a one-to-one perfume consultation, and to hear the stories and inspirations behind Lush's evocative scents.

This event is inspired by JL William's workshop exploring the parallels between poetry and the art of perfume.

LUSH FRESH
HANDMADE



Saturday

The Scottish Poetry Choir: A Taster

13:00 (2 hrs)

- Cheviot
- PWYC

Come along to this taster session to find out what it's like to be part of Scotland's first ever spoken word choir!

In this workshop, **Anita Govan**, the Scottish Poetry Choir's founder, will guide you to develop a collaborative spoken word performance – with a flashmob of the piece taking place at the end of the workshop!

Top Doll

13:30 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £15/£12/£0 festival pass

Karen McCarthy Woolf's novel-in-verse *Top Doll* is an innovative and exciting tale told from the perspective of a collection of antique dolls... In this scratch performance of *Top Doll*, we're delighted to present a brand new collaboration between Karen and the multi-instrumentalist and performer **Kerensa**, whose work moves between a number of genres, including opera-inspired pop.

Walking Through the Unseen World, with Anthony Capildeo

14:00 (1 hr)

- Gates of Dynamic Earth, Holyrood Road
- PWYC

Join award-winning poet **Anthony V. Capildeo** for this experiential poetry walk through Holyrood Park. In addition to reading their own poems and work by others, Anthony will be bringing copies of poems to share, and will invite you to address poems to the more-than-human world around you. See our website for further information on where to meet.



Stepping Into the Surreal: Dean Browne and Caleb Parkin

14:30 (1 hr)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join two tellers of strange tales and blurrers of boundaries in this event chaired by **Luke Kennard**. **Dean Browne's** debut *After Party* and **Caleb Parkin's** second collection *Mingle* share a delight in the surreal and a deliciously dark humour.



Women Speaking Volumes in Verse

14:30 (1 hr)

- Cabaret Bar
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

'Women have always been 50% of the population, but only occupy around 0.5% of recorded history' Bettany Hughes, 2016 — with only a fraction of those the stories of black and brown women. But women have long been telling the tales of our lives.

Come and hear multi-talented poets and artists **Cheryl Martin**, **Raman Mundair** and **Rommi Smith** read and talk to **Sharmilla Beezmohun** about their activist writing lives.



Beyond the Page: Ekphrastic Poetry with Nick Makoha

15:30 (2 hrs)

- Lomond
- £25/£20/£10 festival pass

In *The New Carthaginians*, **Nick Makoha**, shortlisted for the 2025 Forward Prize, draws on Jean-Michel Basquiat's 'exploded collage' style. In this workshop, Nick will guide participants in using visual art to inspire and transform poetry, exploring how art can enhance structure, rhythm, and creativity in writing.



Queer Tales: Works in Progress

16:00 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join us for a scratch night of brand new material and works-in-progress with two of Scotland's standout spoken word poets! **RJ Hunter's** and **Gray Crosbie's** hilarious yet heartbreaking long-form shows in progress will be followed up by an electrifying performance by **Harry Josephine Giles** with the Edinburgh Trans Choir.

Finding Meaning, Seeking Consolation

16:00 (1 hr)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

This year's festival theme, *The Unseen World*, explores how and where we find meaning and solace in an increasingly challenging world. Join **Isabelle Baafi**, **Rosie Garland** and **Janette Ayachi**, chaired by **Alice Tarbuck**, as they discuss how we might predict the future, make sense of the moment and understand the past – through poetry.



Saturday

The Ranting Poets

17:00 (1 hr)

- Cabaret Bar
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

The ranting poets emerged in the 1980s, with poets who were punk and political, angry and activist – and punk poetry may have gone underground but it's never gone away. In this event, we're thrilled to bring together **Tim Wells**, one of the original ranting poets, with up-and-coming punk poet and multi-slam champion **Jay Mitra**.



In Conversation with Len Pennie

17:30 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £15/£12/£0 festival pass

Join **Len Pennie**, in conversation with **Emma Collins**, for a mixture of readings from and discussion about her incisive and fiercely honest new collection, *poyums annaw*. These poems are a call to arms, confronting ideas of patriarchy, gender-based violence and societal injustice with equal parts tenderness, quick-wit and righteous fury.

The Scent of Weather... Poetry and Perfume, with JL Williams & Lush

18:00 (2 hrs)

- Lush, 115 Princes St, Edinburgh EH2 3AA
- £25/£20/£10 festival pass

Join **JL Williams** in this workshop exploring memory, abstraction and the intersections between poetry and perfume, in partnership with Lush. Discover how the two can inspire each other, and create your own poetic work in response to the fascinating world of scent.

LUSH FRESH HANDMADE COSMETICS

Loud Poets Slam Series: Edinburgh Heat

18:00 (2 hrs)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

The prestigious Loud Poets Slam Series returns for its fourth year! Join us to cheer, clap and holler as Edinburgh's top poets compete in the first of 10 heats for the biggest prize in UK slam poetry. Featuring current Edinburgh Champion **Lucas Sheridan** as sacrificial poet, this promises to be a thumping celebration of some of the best spoken word coming out of Scotland today.



Poetry Jam with RJ Hunter & the SpeakEasy House Band

19:00 (1 hr)

- Cabaret Bar
- PWYC

Expect the unexpected – as long as the unexpected includes poetry, music and plenty of improvisation. This year, our perennially popular poetry jam joins forces with **RJ Hunter** and the **SpeakEasy House Band**. Bring along a poem you'd like to perform, or come along to listen, and settle in for a night of musical fun.

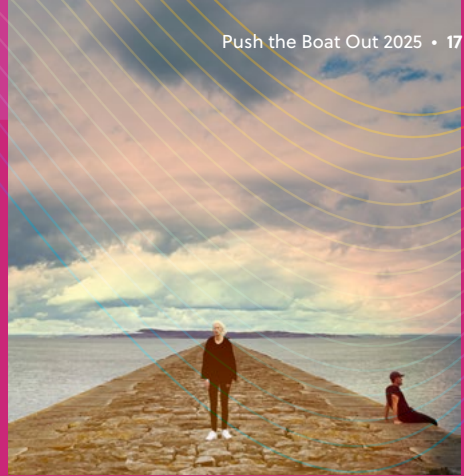
The Clearing

19:30 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £15/£12/£0 festival pass

Join the four winners of the 2024 Royal Society of Literature Jerwood Poetry Award – **Karen McCarthy Woolf**, **Roseanne Watt**, **clare e potter** and **Scott McKendry** – for a premiere of new collaborations co-conceived with musician, **Kathryn Williams**.

These poems amplify whispered stories and recover myths from each corner of the British Isles. They tune into unheard frequencies of language as they find new ways to navigate elegy, absence and joy.



Push the Boat Out Presents: Lord of the Isles & Ellen Renton, Supported by Acolyte

Doors at 19:30
20:15 (2 hrs)

- Hangar 5, Potterrow, 5/2 Bristo Pl,
Edinburgh EH8 9AL
- £15/£12/£0 festival pass

Push the Boat Out's Saturday night gig is back! Be transported into a sublime soundscape as headliners **Lord Of The Isles & Ellen Renton** combine poetry, pedals and synths. They'll be supported by **Acolyte**, an Edinburgh-based poetic and psychedelic ensemble. Expect storytelling and synths, hypnotic loops and harmonic depth.



Saturday

Saturday at a Glance



Discussion



Workshop



Performance



Music

	Upper Hall	Lomond	Main Theatre	Cabaret Bar	Cheviot	Other	Online
10.30–11	Takeover: Glasgow City of Poets			Reimagining Home	Dramatic Readings		
11–11.30							
11.30–12		An Open Book Tour of Scotland	Holding On and Letting Go				
12–12.30							
12.30–13	Versus Versus			Takeover: The Shore Poets			
13–13.30							
13.30–14		Perfume Consulta- tions	Top Doll		The Scottish Poetry Choir: A Taster		
14–14.30						Walking through the Unseen World	Between the Historical and the Imaginary
14.30–15	Stepping Into the Surreal			Women Speaking Volumes in Verse			
15–15.30							
15.30–16		Beyond the Page: Ekphrastic Poetry					
16–16.30	Finding Meaning, Seeking Consolation		Queer Tales: Works in Progress				
16.30–17							
17–17.30				The Ranting Poets			
17.30–18			In Conversa- tion with Len Pennie				
18–18.30							Poetry Lab
18.30–19	Loud Poets Slam Series					The Scent of Weather... Poetry and Perfume	
19–19.30				Poetry Jam			
19.30–20			The Clearing				
20–20.30						Doors at 19.30	
20.30–21							
21–21.30						Lord of the Isles & Ellen Renton, supported by Acolyte	
21.30–22							

Sunday 23 November

Embodied Poetry: A Yoga and Writing Workshop

10:30 (1 hr, 30 mins)

- Lomond
- £25/£20/£10 festival pass

Join award-winning poet and storyteller **Spencer Mason** for a poetry and yoga workshop, with 45 minutes of yoga leading into 45 minutes of embodied responses to writing prompts. Participants will be invited to explore writing in any medium they choose. Please bring a notebook and pen with you. Yoga mats will be provided.

The Mythic and the Familiar: Fiona Benson and Pascale Petit

11:00 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Start your Sunday right with what promises to be a haunting double bill, as two poets at the top of their game read from and discuss their unsettling and intriguing latest collections. In *Midden Witch*, **Fiona Benson** lets the women accused of witchcraft speak back to us. **Pascale Petit's** *Beast*, meanwhile, is populated by mythic and familial beasts, roaming wildernesses near and far.

Poetry as Exile: Marjorie Lotfi and Najwan Darwish

11:00 (1 hr)

- Cabaret Bar
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

The experience of creating art from afar when your homeland is in conflict is uniquely challenging. **Najwan Darwish** and **Marjorie Lotfi** will each present new work considering this theme, especially commissioned for the festival, alongside readings from their powerful repertoires. This will be followed by a discussion chaired by **Esa Aldegheri**.

A Portobello Poetry Walk: Being Guided By Nature

11:00 (1 hr, 30 mins)

- Meet at The Portobello Bookshop, 46 Portobello High Street, Edinburgh, EH15 1DA
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join **clare e. potter** for a poetry walk around Portobello Beach where we will pay deep attention, taking nature as our guide for our writing. We will practise listening and noticing, and think about how the environment we are in can be a collaborator in our writing.

The Portobello Bookshop



Magma: The Liberation Issue

12:00 (1 hr)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join us for the launch of **Magma Poetry's** new magazine, the Liberation issue., full of rousing poetry and defiant prose. Hosted by **Isabelle Baafi**, the event will feature readings from **Alycia Pirmohamed**, **Nat Raha**, **Zain Rishi** and **Amy L. King**, as well as a video presentation and discussion, inviting us to consider what liberation truly means and how we can enact it.



Sunday

Re-imagining the Hero's Journey: Luke Kennard and Nick Makoha

13:00 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Come and listen as **Luke Kennard** and **Nick Makoha** read from and discuss their latest collections, *The Book of Jonah* and *The New Carthaginians*, discussing the stories we think we already know, and the unexpected places they might lead us.



Punk, Poetry and Politics

13:00 (1 hr)

- Cabaret bar
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

In our festival theme *Poetry Is Punk*, we explore poetry as a DIY art form: political, exciting and subversive. Join punk poets **Paul Case**, **Mátyás Dunajcsik** and slam champion **Kemi George Simpson**, in conversation with **Jay Mitra**, as they dig into the intersections between poetry, politics and punk.



Supported using public funding by
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ENGLAND**

The Alchemy of Metaphor: a Workshop with Pascale Petit

13:00 (1 hr, 30 mins)

- Lomond
- £25/£20/£10 festival pass

Join award-winning poet **Pascale Petit** to write poems full of metamorphosis and creative alchemy as she encourages you to explore the power of metaphor, and its ability to translate the personal into vivid new realms. Discover how to transform your experiences, and how the more-than-human worlds can help us turn experience into beauty.

Pink Witch, with the 12

14:00 (1 hr)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Join the 12 collective for a showcase of *Pink Witch*, a visceral, wry and ever surprising anthology responding to the 2023 Barbie movie and the Witches of Scotland campaign – which seeks historic justice for the people executed for witchcraft in Scotland. Intimate and eclectic, these are poems which question identity, vilification and the names historically used to constrain women.



The Pleasures and Power of Reading, with Peter Mackay

14:30 (1 hr)

- Main Theatre
- PWYC

What happens when we read? What is it that we get from losing ourselves in a book? Does reading actually improve our wellbeing? Join Makar **Peter Mackay** in conversation with **Philippa Cochrane** and **Dr Sarah McGeown** for this special Book Week Scotland event, as he explores the impact that being a reader has had on his life.





Gaelic, Scots, Mè'phàa: Translation Beyond Dominant Languages

16:30 (1 hr)

- Upper Hall
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Colin Bramwell's *Fower Pessoa*s has recently been making waves for its bold translation of Fernando Pessoa into vernacular Scots. What possibilities emerge when we remember that living literary languages aren't just written in, but necessarily translated between? Join us for a discussion between Colin, **Robbie MacLeòid** and **Juana Adcock**, chaired by **Harry Josephine Giles**, to explore those possibilities.

Gaming the System

17:00 (1 hr, 15 mins)

- Lomond
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Play has always been central to how Push the Boat Out explores and platforms poetry – and from playful poetry it's just a hop, skip and jump to poetic games... Join **Calum Rodger**, **Krishan Coupland**, **ABS**, **Luci Holland** and the young people from the Tinderbox Games Club as they discuss the parallels between poetry and games, and the possibilities that emerge in combining the two.

Chaired through the ConVERSE Emerging Chairs Programme with the University of Edinburgh.

Out of the Archive

15:30 (1 hr)

- Lomond
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Today's panel brings together three poets who've drawn on a range of archives for their work – from the accounts of witch trials to the archive of Muriel Spark. Join **Theresa Muñoz**, **Fiona Benson** and **Rommi Smith** as they discuss the challenges and joys of archival research, and how it can feed into and transform a poetic practice.

Poetry is Punk

15:30 (1 hr)

- Cabaret Bar
- £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Don't miss what promises to be an electrifying performance with two experimental poets and performers! Between them, German-Hungarian polyglot punk poet **Mátyás Dunajcsik** and Edinburgh-based poet and activist **Nat Raha** combine spoken word, bass, loop pedals and a whole lot of energy.



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
School of Literatures,
Languages and Cultures



Sunday



Anthropocene – New Poetic Performances

17:30 (1 hr)

→ Main Theatre

→ £15/£12/£0 festival pass

We're delighted to premiere three new poetry-led performance commissions in association with the National Theatre of Scotland! Investigating the theme of '*Anthropocene: the Human-Altered World*', **Iona Lee & Nikki Kent**, **Garry Mackenzie & Sam Firth**, and **Taylor Dyson & Craig Aitchison** explore poetry in conversation with different artistic disciplines.



Garrach
Charsullo
Trust

Rock the Boat

18:30 (1hr 30 mins)

→ Upper Hall

→ Free, ticketed

Feeling inspired to share your own poems? Join our hosts, **Catherine Wilson Garry** and **Julia Sorensen**, for the festival iteration of Rock the Boat, Push the Boat Out's longstanding monthly poetry open mic. Register via our website to perform your poetry alongside a score of other open mic-ers or kick back, relax and enjoy the vibes. With featured poets **Sam Phipps**, **Dean Tsang** and **Alice Keeling**.

Bàird Bhaile: Gaelic Poetry and Song Night

18:30 (1 hr, 30 mins)

→ Cabaret Bar

→ £12/£10/£0 festival pass

Round out the festival with an evening of Gaelic poetry and songs, brought together by **Jeni Flannigan** (of Bothan Dhùn Èideann and Lusan Bui) and hosted by **Niall O' Gallagher**. Come with us and immerse yourself in the witty, soulful world of the 'local bards', past and present. You'll be in good company: **Josie Duncan**, **Iona Mairead Davidson & Calum 'singing weatherman' MacColla**, alongside other established and emerging voices from the wider Bothan Dhùn Èideann community.

Bothan
Dhùn Èideann



Comhairle nan
Leabhraichean
The Gaelic Books Council

Light it Up: Tinderbox Orchestra

20:00 (1 hr)

→ Main Theatre

→ £15/£12/£0 festival pass

Join us for a glorious festival finale! Bringing together rappers, poets and singers with soaring strings, heavy brass, woodwind, and thundering bass and drums, **Tinderbox Orchestra** are teaming up with some of Scotland's most exciting spoken word artists to combine original music and spoken word performances transforming preconceptions of what an orchestra can be.



TINDERBOX



Sunday at a Glance



Discussion



Workshop



Performance



Music

	Upper Hall	Lomond	Main Theatre	Cabaret Bar	Other	Online
10.30–11		Embodied Poetry				
11–11.30			The Mythic and the Familiar	Poetry as Exile	Portobello Poetry Walk	
11.30–12						
12–12.30	Magma					
12.30–13						
13–13.30		The Alchemy of Metaphor	Re-imagining the Hero's Journey	Punk, Poetry and Politics		
13.30–14						
14–14.30	Pink Witch, with the 12					Collective Memory, Documentation, and Resistance with Noor Hindi
14.30–15			The Pleasures and Power of Reading			
15–15.30						
15.30–16		Out of the Archive		Poetry is Punk		
16–16.30						
16.30–17	Gaelic, Scots, Mè'phàà					
17–17.30						
17.30–18		Gaming the System	Anthropocene			
18–18.30						
18.30–19	Rock the Boat			Bàird Bhaile		
19–19.30						
19.30–20						
20–20.30			Light it Up: Tinderbox Orchestra			
20.30–21						

take the next step

Development Day Friday 21 November

Whether you're just starting out or looking to make the next step into publishing and performance – our Development Day is here to offer practical advice and encouragement. Join us for a day of networking and workshops in a friendly and supportive environment.

The Development Day is free to attend; you can book events individually but we'd encourage you to join us for the full day. Snacks, drinks and a light lunch will be provided.

ConVERSE

We're once again working in partnership with the University of Edinburgh's School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures to present ConVERSE: a project to support students as they develop their skills as event chairs. A deft and impassioned chair is very much a co-pilot of any event – they can help ensure the event soars, sizzles and leaves a lasting impression on audiences and authors alike. At best, it will be remembered for years to come.

Students were invited to attend chairing masterclasses led by the University's Writer in Residence, Mary Paulson-Ellis, along with other experienced voices. Selected students have been matched up with events to chair during the festival, and offered further support from the School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures at UoE. This partnership offers us the chance to support and nurture future talent and we're pleased to add it to the portfolio of support that we offer developing artists.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of Literatures,
Languages and Cultures

poetry on your u

Words that Burn: Human Rights and Poetry Workshop

10:30 (1 hr, 15 mins)

13:30 (1 hr, 15 mins)

→ Lomond

→ Free, ticketed

Join Push the Boat Out and Amnesty International UK for a special two-hour workshop aimed at poet educators. You'll learn about Human Rights Education and how you can embed it into your facilitation practice. Together we'll explore how creativity can be a tool for activism and a powerful form of protest.

There are two opportunities to take part in this workshop.



How to Succeed as a Creative Freelancer

11:45 (1 hr)

→ Upper Hall

→ Free, ticketed

Making it as a writer involves a whole host of skills: promoting your own work, juggling different jobs or chasing up invoices. Writers are rarely just writers – they're creative freelancers wearing multiple hats. Our panel **Heather Parry, Ola Wojtkiewicz, and Jennie Owen**, will be discussing how you can navigate the gig economy, while still making time for the important thing: writing.

Chaired through the ConVERSE Emerging Chairs Programme with the University of Edinburgh.



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
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Start It Yourself

10:30 (1 hr)

→ Upper Hall

→ Free, ticketed

As an emerging writer, starting your own project – whether it's an open mic night or magazine or something else altogether – is a great way to grow your skills and your network. Join our panel **Laura Jones-Rivera** from 404 Ink, **Jamie Pettinger** of EHFM and **Julia Sorensen**, host of Rock the Boat, to hear how they built their own projects from the ground up, and the skills they learned along the way.

Chaired through the ConVERSE Emerging Chairs Programme with the University of Edinburgh.



THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
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Hosting Like a Pro

13:30 (1 hr, 30 mins)

→ Upper Hall

→ Free, ticketed

A good compere can make or break an event. How do you get an audience energised without stealing the limelight? Join Loud Poets **Katie Ailes** and **Kevin Mclean** for a workshop on the tricks of the trade when it comes to hosting a successful event.



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downstream

Online events

Join in from home. Our online workshops feature international guests, so you can develop your practice with tips and insights from world-renowned writers. We're livestreaming a number of events and presenting a fantastic selection of live broadcasts with EHFM Radio. Full details on our website.

Translating into Different Places, with Lorna Goodison

14:00 (1 hr, 30 mins), Friday

→ Online

→ £25/£20/£10 festival pass

Lorna Goodison's latest publication is an astonishing new translation of *The Inferno* by Dante, drawing on the entire continuum of Jamaican speech. Join the former Poet Laureate of Jamaica for this online workshop on translating existing stories into different places and Englishes. We'll explore the possibilities this opens up and find innovative solutions to the challenges posed.

Online Double Bill: Between the Historical and the Imaginary

14:00 (1 hr) Saturday

→ Online

→ PWYC

Vidyan Ravinthiran's *Avidya* and **Arundhati Subramaniam's** *The Gallery of Upside Down Women* map a world trying to find its axis in a season of change. Join these two poets online as they read from and discuss their luminous latest collections, the forgotten histories they dissect and the new worlds they point towards.

Poetry Lab with Victoria Chang: Come Play!

17:00 (1 hr, 30 mins) Saturday

→ Online

→ £25/£20/£10 festival pass

Join Forward Prize winner **Victoria Chang** for an online generative writing lab, reading and writing poems which explore how we find meaning in an increasingly challenging world. Come to this online workshop with a big imagination, an open mind, a laptop and/or a notebook, and be prepared to have fun as we experiment in new ways.

Collective Memory, Documentation, and Resistance with Noor Hindi

14:00 (1 hr, 30 mins) Sunday

→ Online

→ £25/£20/£10 festival pass

In this workshop, we'll be exploring poems from the Palestinian poetry anthology *Heaven Looks Like Us*, reading poems that explore themes of homeland, grief and joy, and silence and testimony. We'll discuss how poets transform lived experiences through art that challenges erasure, opening space to imagine new futures. **Noor Hindi** will guide participants through generative writing prompts to create new work.



poetry on your wavelength

About Push the Boat Out

Push the Boat Out was created to capture the vibrancy and dynamism of contemporary poetry and spoken word, to celebrate its ever-increasing influence and to bring it into conversation with other art forms.

We want not only to give poetry a new platform, but to create an environment where all variations of this vital art form are encouraged to grow, evolve and even collide. We explore fresh, inventive ways to bring poetry and audiences together by challenging perceptions of what poetry is, how and where it can be enjoyed and who it is for. Our programme reflects and engages directly with the world around us in all its complexity and diversity; and aims to contribute to Scotland's long legacy – and future – as a place where poetry and the arts are thriving.

Year-round, we run regular online writing workshops with internationally acclaimed poets and special guests from around the world while Rock the Boat, our hugely popular open-mic night, takes place monthly. Follow us online, get involved and get in touch to see how you can play a part in our story.



@ptbopoetry

info@pushtheboatout.org

Support Us

Push the Boat Out is now a registered charity. Donations from people like you are vital in supporting us to keep offering this unique, vibrant, eclectic festival, alongside our growing community and year round programmes. With your help we can continue to contribute to increasing the diversity of poetry – in form, cross-art form pollination, voices platformed



*scan to
donate*

Join our Crew!

Become a Friend of Push the Boat Out

We're launching our very first Friends scheme! As well as being a vital part of our crew, for just £40, Friends enjoy 10% off everything, early access to booking, exclusive invitations, and more.

Friends memberships will usually be valid from April to March each year. But by supporting us in this first year, you'll not only be able to enjoy an introductory price of £40 for membership until March 2026, you'll also be able to renew at the same price for 2026/27.

Tickets

book now

Tickets can be purchased via pushtheboatout.org or via our Box Office partners, Citizen Ticket. Tickets can also be purchased from the Pleasance during the festival. We recommend pre-booking as no allocation is held for door sales.

Individual event prices range from £0 to £25. Concessions are available along with free companion tickets. We have a number of events offered on a Pay What You Can basis with tiered pricing from £0 to £15. These are tagged throughout the brochure as PWYC.

Festival Pass

Join us for the whole weekend with a brilliant value Festival Pass. Priced at £50, there are a limited number of passes which will give access to the whole programme free of charge, other than the workshops and warm up event on board the Fingal which are offered at half price or less. T&C's apply.

How to Find Us

All events take place at Pleasance, unless otherwise stated.



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Pleasance
Courtyard
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