

BACLS

THE BRITISH
ASSOCIATION FOR
CONTEMPORARY
LITERARY STUDIES

BACLS-WHN 2025 Programme

Pathfoot Building, University of Stirling

All seminars in Stream 1 will take place in the Pathfoot Lecture Theatre

All seminars in Stream 2 will take place in Seminar Room D1

All seminars in Stream 3 will take place in Seminar Room D3

Tuesday 10th June:

15:00-15:30 – Registration [*Crush Hall*]

Tea and coffee served on arrival.

15:30-15:45 – Welcome [*Pathfoot Lecture Theatre*]

15:45-17:15 - Panel A

PANEL A1. The Politics of Professionalism: Contemporary Authorship and the Work of Writing:

Chair: Charlotte Terrell

- Alice Bennett, “‘I don’t feel that I am an ‘anything’ writer’: Ali Smith as (Professional) Writer”
- Katie da Cunha Lewin, ‘Professional amateurs’ [online]
- Andy Perluzzo, ‘The MFA Industry’ [online]
- Denise Wong, “‘in the epilogue of wants’: Contemporary Writing about Not Writing”

PANEL A2. Space, Place, Nostalgia:

Chair: Barbara Franchi

- Yugin Teo, ‘Visual memory and nostalgic resistance: lyrics and graphic narratives in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *The Summer We Crossed Europe in the Rain*’
- Lily Taylor, ‘The Fire Now: Elemental exposures of the contemporary home in the literary witnessing of the Grenfell Tower fire’
- Ziyang Li, ‘Cohesion, Exile, Return: Non-Human Narratives and the Shape of Diaspora Community in *Never Let Me Go*’

PANEL A3. Eco-poetics:

Chair: Martin Schauss

- Georgie Rowe, 'The Environmentalism of English Traditional Folk Music'
- Abigail Jean Kovaleski, 'Bridging Contemplative Ecology, Material Ecocriticism, and Eco-Spirituality: Rethinking Human-Nature Relations in Mary Oliver's Poetry'
- John Sannaee, 'Timelessness and Urgency in the Literature of Ecocide'

17:15-18:00 Pre-plenary Drinks [*Crush Hall*]

18:00-19:15 Plenary Session: 'Contemporary Conversations: Literary Magazines and Regional Publishing' [*Pathfoot Lecture Theatre*]

Chair: Caroline Wintersgill

- Laura Jones, *404 Ink* (Scotland)
- Liam Harrison, *Tolka* (Ireland)
- Heather Parry, *Extra Teeth* (Scotland)
- Kathryn Tann, *Folding Rock* (Wales)

19:30- Dinner (optional)

We have a booking in the marquee at local pub The Meadowpark, which is about a 10-minute walk from the conference building.

Wednesday 11th June:

09:30-11:00 - Panel B

PANEL B1. Writing in the Age of 'Global English':

Chair: Yugin Teo

- Ágnes Györke, 'Cosmopolitan Affects in David Szalay's *Turbulence* (2018)'
- Rehnuma Sazzad, 'The Emerging Formations of English Studies: A Dialogue between John Guillory and Stefano Evangelista through Amitav Ghosh' [online]
- Tara Senanayake, "'There are in the World Steel Women': Shattering Silence through Gendered Re-presentations of Conflict in the Novels of Manuka Wijesinghe and V.V. Ganeshanathan'

PANEL B2. Managing Conflict and Crisis:

Chair: Yara Rodrigues Fowler

- Arin Keeble, 'Cultural Trauma in Idra Novey's *Take What You Need*'
- Bob Eaglestone, 'Jonathan Coe and Crisis'
- Joseph Anderton, 'Reach and Teach? Homelessness Storytelling Guidance and Karen Campbell's *Paper Cup*'

PANEL B3. Style, Now:

Chair: Nicholas Taylor-Collins

- Richard Robinson, 'Mediate style: Lahiri translating Starnone translating James'
- Barry Sheils, 'Sentence mania in Gerald Murnane's work'
- Olivia Sutherland, '"Something to do with difference and sameness": Styles of Narration and the Autofictional Turn in Ali Smith's *Companion Piece*.'
- Liam Harrison, 'The Journal Era: Style and Twenty-First Century Irish Literary Magazines'

11:00-11:30 - Refreshment Break [Crush Hall]

Tea and coffee provided.

11:30-13:00 - PANEL C

PANEL C1. From Autofiction to the Sad Girl Novel: Rethinking Realism:

Chair: Liam Harrison

- Oliver Haslam, 'Anaesthetic Temporalities in Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*'
- Orlaith Darling, 'Carrying on in The Sad Girl Novel' [online]
- Alberto Andrés Calvo, 'The Brainrot Novel: Reading the attention crisis in extremely online fiction'
- Chun-yen Chen, 'Autofiction and the Crisis of Realism Today'

PANEL C2. Uncertain Affects:

Chair: Charles Wong

- Mike Collins, ‘Centering the “Broken Middle”: Lydia Davis, Gillian Rose and the Virtues of Aporia’
- Rosie Price, “‘An impossible possession”: Simone de Beauvoir and the ethics of ambiguity in the novels of Elizabeth Strout.’
- Capps Juliano, ‘The Problem of Truth and Aesthetics in Anglo-American Literary Criticism: Toril Moi, Jonathan Kramnick, and the Vulnerability Hypothesis’

PANEL C3. Between Keys and Streams: New Approaches to Constraint and Automatism in Contemporary Creative Practice:

Chair: Jennifer Cooke

- Victor Rees, ‘Acolytes of Breton, Footnotes to Roussel: Brian Catling and the Hollow Word’
- Tim Jarvis, ‘The Rite of the False Paraclete: Theoretical Fictions of a Possible Other’
- Anne Royston, ‘Art in the Age of (Artificial) Artificial Intelligence’

13:00-14:00 – Lunch [*Crush Hall*]

Sandwiches, wraps and fruit provided.

14:00-15:30 - PANEL D

PANEL D1. Rethinking Critical Method:

Chair: Alice Bennett

- Sara Dahlberg, ‘Loving/Knowing Melville: New Pathways for Literary Criticism after the Method Wars’
- Joseph Williams, ‘Judgement vs interpretation? Or, how to read a book with Lorna Sage’
- Ben Davies, ‘Critical Reading and the Fantasy of Method’ [online]
- Lauren Sheerman, ‘Pearlescent reading — lapidary approaches to Anne Carson’s Nox’

PANEL D2. Capital, Collectives, Resistance:

Chair: Gabriele Lazzari

- Rafael Lubner, ‘Listening for What Can Be Left Out: Totality, Anti-Blackness, Capital’
- Yara Rodrigues Fowler, ‘Abolitionist formalism: unmaking and remaking, and Zadie Smith’s NW (2012)’

- Yeisil Peña Contreras, ‘Women’s voices from below: Solidarity in Chilean, Nigerian, and Pakistani contemporary fiction’
- Imogen Dobson, ‘Decriminalisation Now: Sex Work in British and North American Literature’

PANEL D3. Queer Histories and Futures:

Chair: Ruth Maxey

- Giorgia Garilli, “‘A Touch, a Hook, and Gone’: Queer Hands, Touching History in Yael van de Wouden’s *The Safe Keep*’
- Max Shirley, ‘Queer Forms of Genre Fiction’
- Timothy C. Baker, ‘Remaking Queer Scottish History’

15:30-16:00 - Refreshment Break [*Crush Hall*]

Tea and coffee provided.

16:00-17:30 PANEL E

PANEL E1. Narratives of Environment and the Non-Human:

Chair: Saihong Li

- Barbara Franchi, ‘Sarah Hall’s and Eleanor Catton’s Rural Eco-Fictions: Neo-Imperial Hubris and the eco-Gothic’
- Martin Schauss, ‘Olga Tokarczuk’s Virtual-Material Border Crossings’

PANEL E2. Contemporary Modernisms: Literature, Critique, Theory:

Chair: Tara Senanayake

- John Greaney, ‘On the contemporaneity of modernism: the reconstitution of Europe and the renationalisation of the avant-garde’
- Ruth Alison Clemens, ‘Fake monographs and empty archives: modernist countermemory in *LOTE* and *The Most Secret Memory of Men*’
- Ian Ellison, ‘Franz Kafka’s Anniversaries: A Revaluation’

PANEL E3. Feminist Method:

Chair: Giorgia Garilli

- Avani Udgaonkar, 'Revisionism and/or Revenue: Contemporary Mythopoesis and the Literary Marketplace'
- Jennifer Cooke, 'Life-writing Against Immediacy'
- Jessica Widner, 'Hellfeminism: Resistance and Surrealism in Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* and Bora Chung's *Cursed Bunny*'

17:45-19:00 – Plenary Roundtable and Workshop: The Century at 25:

[Pathfoot Lecture Theatre]

- Alice Bennett (Bergen)
- Oliver Haslam (Evansville)
- Arin Keeble (Edinburgh Napier)
- Melissa Schuh (Kiel)
- Denise Wong (Giessen)

19:30 - Conference dinner @ the Stirling Court Hotel

Thursday 12th June

09:00-10:00 - BACLS AGM *[Pathfoot Lecture Theatre]*

10:00-11:30 - PANEL F

PANEL F1. The Ali Smith Panel:

Chair: Olivia Sutherland

- Marta Bagues-Bautista – 'Towards an Ethics of Openness: Hospitality, Friendship, and Resistance in Ali Smith's *Autumn* (2016)'
- Alex Calder – 'After Seasonal: Political Crisis, Futurity, and Connective Possibilities in Ali Smith's "Wake" (2023) and *Gliff* (2024)'
- Sara Upstone and Kristian Shaw, 'Transglossic Storytelling: the Productive Optimism of Ali Smith's Seasonal Quartet' [online]

PANEL F2. Migration and Border Crossing:

Chair: Christine Ferguson

- Peter Ely, 'The Ends of the Nation: Borders in the Contemporary Novel'
- Gabriele Lazzari, 'Literature and Migration Now: New Perspectives on the Confinement Continuum'

- Wiktoria Tunska, 'Who is Afraid of Us? Literary Laboratories of Anxiety, Eastern Europeans, and the Fragile Solidarities in post-Brexit Fiction'

PANEL F3. Neoliberalism and the Novel:

Chair: Sandro Eich

- Marta Zanucco, 'Unreachable objects, spatiotemporal disruptions, and the neoliberal meritocratic myth in Isabel Waidner's *Corey Fah Does Social Mobility*'
- Charles Chan-Wai Wong, "'Floating Sideways:' Lateral Aesthetics & Post-Neoliberal Subjects in Anglo-American Millennial Novel'
- Ryan Trimm, "'What Our Reality Is Made Of': Money, Metafiction, and Temporality in Paul Murray's *The Mark and the Void*'"

11:30-11:45 - Refreshment Break [Crush Hall]

Tea and coffee provided.

11:45-13:15 - PANEL G

PANEL G1. Contemporary Fiction, Empathy and Transformation:

Chair: Richard Robinson

- Kai Tan, 'Choreography and Dance in Ian McEwan's *Solar* (2010)' [online]
- Dominic Dean, 'Political and Prose Evolutions in Alan Hollinghurst's *Our Evenings*'
- Nicholas Taylor-Collins, 'Driving death: John Banville's Freudian correction'
- Ruth Maxey, 'Disability, race and the myth of brilliance in Akemi Dawn Bowman's *Starfish*'

PANEL G2. Speculative Fiction, Speculative Politics:

Chair: Bob Eaglestone

- Sandro Eich, "'Her duty to her country was done. Now she could do duty to her conscience': whistleblowing and neoliberalism in Matthew Richardson's spy fiction novel *The Scarlet Papers* (2023)
- Nick Hubble, "'The Situation is Nominal': Ken MacLeod's Critique of the Scottish Programme'
- Anneke Schewe & Melissa Schuh, "'This was how they altered the tracks of history': subversive dark academia in R.F. Kuang's *Babel*'
- Sam McReavy, "'Retro-Utopian Second Wave Feminism Revisited: the Right to the City and Utopian Spatial Imaginaries in Sarah Hall's *The Carhullan Army*.'"

PANEL G3. Literatures of Social Reproduction:

Chair: Jennifer Cooke

- Sophie Jones, ‘“Gestational Stall”: Reproductive Contingency in Christine Smallwood’s *The Life of the Mind*’
- Roberta Garrett, ‘Privatised motherhood and the scene of crisis: neomodernist angst, abjection and the maternal trauma narrative in the work of Yuko Tshuima, Elena Ferrante, Clare Kilroy and Rachel Yoder’
- Elia Cugini, ‘Family’s Game: Vigdis Hjorth’s *Is Mother Dead* (2022)’

13:15-14:15 - Lunch [*Crush Hall*]

Sandwiches, wraps and fruit provided.

14:15-15:45 - PANEL H

PANEL H1. Digital Literary Culture and Literary Institutions:

Chair: Georgie Rowe

- Natalie Wall, ‘*The Goldfinch* and Goodreads: pain, plausibility and the coming-of-age plot’
- Natthanai Prasannam, ‘Rewriting the “Herstory” of Books: A Case of Lily Fest in Thailand’
- Shakiba Barghi – ‘Bookish Nostalgia: Reviving Classic Texts in Social Media Bookish Communities’ [online]

PANEL H2. Northern Imaginaries:

Chair: Bob Eaglestone

- Calum MacLean Esler, ‘Mary, Queen in Scots: Mary’s Language in Contemporary Scottish Poetry’
- Connor McGrath, ‘Caledonian, Crossed with the Tennysonian: War, Identity, and Form in Douglas Dunn’s ‘Dressed to Kill’
- Owain Burrell, ‘The Return to Northumbria; Anglo-Saxonism in contemporary Northern imaginaries’

15:45-16:00 - Closing Remarks