

Fifteenth International Robert Graves Conference

Robert Graves and Correspondences

12-16 July 2022

Speakers and Abstracts

Plenary Lectures

Fran Brearton: ‘Ghostly Echoes: Robert Graves and Derek Mahon’

Fran Brearton is Professor of Modern Poetry at Queen’s University Belfast and a member of the Royal Irish Academy. Her books include *The Great War in Irish Poetry*, *Reading Michael Longley*, and, as editor, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Poetry*. She edited and annotated an edition of Graves’s *Good-bye to All That* for Penguin Classics. Recent essays and articles include work on Yeats and Kipling, flight in modern poetry, poetry of the Northern Ireland ‘Troubles’, and the politics of remembrance.

Patrick McGuinness: ‘Graves’s *Correspondances*’

Patrick McGuinness is a British-Belgian writer and academic. The author of two novels, a memoir and two books of poems, he teaches French and Comparative Literature at Oxford, where he is a Fellow of St Anne’s College.

Jean Moorcroft Wilson: ‘Musing on Muses: Margot Callas Revealed’

Jean Moorcroft Wilson has been described as the ‘doyenne of war poet biographers’. Her publications include biographies of Isaac Rosenberg (on whom she lectures worldwide), Siegfried Sassoon, Edward Thomas and Virginia Woolf. Her *Robert Graves: from Great War Poet to Good-Bye to All That* is published by Bloomsbury.

Panel Sessions: Abstracts and Biographies

Panel 1:

Gregory Leadbetter: ‘The Face in the Mirror: The Poet and the Critic in Graves’

This paper will examine the correspondence of the poet and the critic in Graves, by considering some of the ways in which Graves the poet and Graves the critic implicitly address and respond to each other. Throughout his writing, Graves is acutely self-conscious as a poet and lays great importance on identifying what it meant – for him and for others – to be a poet. The paper will explore the affiliation of the poet and the critic – and their distinctive methodological cross-fertilisation – in Graves’s work, to draw inferences that comment on the nature of poetry as a way of thinking, its character as a calling, and its relation to the poet’s prose.

Gregory Leadbetter is Professor of Poetry at Birmingham City University. His research focuses on Romantic poetry and thought, the traditions to which these relate, and the history and practice of poetry more generally. His books of poetry include *Balanuve* (with photographs by Phil Thomson) (Broken Sleep, 2021), *Maskwork* (Nine Arches Press, 2020; longlisted for the Laurel Prize 2021), *The Fetch* (Nine Arches Press, 2016) and the pamphlet *The Body in the Well* (HappenStance Press, 2007). His book *Coleridge and the Daemonic Imagination* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) won the University English Book Prize 2012.

Paul O’Prey: “Thomas Hardy and Robert Graves: A Tale of Two Picnics”

A consideration of the influence of Thomas Hardy on the poetry of Robert Graves with an emphasis on two poems in particular: ‘Where the Picnic Was’, and ‘Last Day of Leave (1916)’

Paul O’Prey has edited Robert Graves’s selected poems, selected letters and essays on poetry. He gave the 2016 Robert Graves Society Talk at St John’s College Oxford and the 2017 Annual Robert Graves Society Lecture at the Wimbledon Book Festival. Recent edited books include *First World War: Poems from the Front* (2014) and *Counter-Wave: Poetry of Rescue in the First World War* (2018). Along with Pilar Garcia, Paul runs Dare-Gale Press.

Panel 2:

Chris Nicholson: ‘Translating trauma through text and film: Reverberations of Robert Graves’s *The Shout*’

Graves’s 1924 short story *The Shout* has been described as having ‘a combination of features that can be considered hallmarks of almost any modernist writer’. Indeed, Graves’s densely symbolic and oblique text, which can be read as a prose poem, draws upon his still recent and psychologically traumatising experiences in the trenches of the First World War and his ambivalent reading and engagement with psychoanalysis. The text acts as a dramatic exploration the themes that will later be explored somewhat flippantly in his autobiography *Goodbye to All That* (1929), and it arguably even prefigures, in embryonic form, a model that will eventually cohere within his 1948 *The White Goddess*. This paper will examine how Graves explores and translates the experience of psychological fragmentation through disruptive literary techniques especially, particularly associated with sound. These concerns

will be picked up in a critical review of the film treatment, *The Shout*, directed by Jerzy Skolimowski in 1978 which won the Grand Prix de Jury. I suggest that Skolimowski's childhood experience during the Second World War may have left him especially attuned to the underlying themes in *The Shout*. How successfully does Skolimowski translate what is already a complex and seemingly obscure text into visual and auditory form, and to what critical reception?

Chris Nicholson is Head of the Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytical Studies at the University of Essex.

Alicja Bemben: 'Othering and Familiarising with Claudius'

In Graves's Claudian books, there are a few sets of correspondence that show us explicitly how various characters perceive Claudius. For instance, the exchange of letters between Augustus and Livia concerning the protagonist's intellectual capabilities, the messages he receives from his family members and friends – both the object of interest of this project – as well as many other missives and succinct messages (not germane to this project). In these, we might note two contrasting attitudes toward Claudius – one belittling and one esteeming him. The focus of this presentation is on the working of these attitudes, which I intend to show is based on two mechanisms: othering (in its various forms) and familiarising (also in its various forms). To substantiate the above, I develop the following line of argumentation: my presentation opens with a very brief outline of the correspondence included in the Claudian books. Then, it presents the theories of othering proposed by Lajos Brons and familiarising put forward by Ama De-Graft Aikins. Having delineated my theoretical basis, I move on to the key part of my proposal, which is reading the selected correspondence included in the novels vis-a-vis the mechanisms of othering and familiarising that can be observed in it. I close my presentation by pointing out several implications of my arguments.

Alicja Bemben is Assistant Professor at the University of Silesia, Poland. She is a founder of the H/Story research group under the auspices of which she has co-organised several conferences (<https://www.hstory.us.edu.pl/>). She has also co-edited monographs and authored texts dealing primarily with historical novels, historiography, and their affinities. Her latest publication is *Emotions as Engines of History* (Routledge 2022). She is an associate editor of *The Robert Graves Review* and cooperates with several other journals.

Panel 3:

Anett K. Jessop: 'Adaptation & Collaboration: Laura Riding & Robert Graves's "Greeks and Trojans"'

My paper engages with the theme 'Robert Graves and Correspondences' through several of the identified topics corresponding to 'adaptation and collaboration'. My presentation will report on an ongoing project I have undertaken to transcribe and authenticate a manuscript by Laura Riding currently held in the Southern Illinois University (USA) special collections. William Graves alerted me to this unfinished screenplay, 'Greeks and Trojans' (c. 1937), that Riding had based on her historical novel *A Trojan Ending* (1937) and that she and Robert Graves were adapting as a commercial venture encouraged by Graves's book-to-film project based on *I, Claudius*. There is evidence in letters and manuscript marginalia that both writers had a hand in preparing the 'Greeks and Trojans' script. Riding's play is a retelling of the fall

of Troy from the perspective of Cressida. Riding's prioritizing of Cressida's account of historical events is a revision of the Troilus and Cressida legend—one in which Cressida is vilified as capricious and disloyal—that comes down through medieval and Renaissance literature. Riding's recovery of historical women in *A Trojan Ending* as well as in her other historical novel, *The Lives of Wives* (1939), offers early examples of feminist re-envisioning of the classical past (now a robust cross-disciplinary field). This presentation shares what I gather of Riding and Graves's cooperative writing process ('texts and writers in dialogue'); generic shifts in book-to-screenplay adaptations ('how literary texts correspond with each other'); and will speculate—specific to this manuscript—on modernists' interest in re-envisioning classical history.

Anett K. Jessop is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas at Tyler, USA. She teaches 20th- and 21st-century American literature and creative writing.

Stephen Rogers and Anam Kyinat: “The Romantic Habit in English Poets”: Correspondences - Laura Riding, Robert Graves and *Epilogue*

In James Reeves's essay, 'The Romantic Habit in English Poets', first published in *Epilogue* No. 1, he attempts to trace the direction of English poetry from the Renaissance through the Romantics to the contemporary moment in terms of certain characteristics. He discusses what he terms 'first-hand poetic life' and 'original poetic experience' in contrast with the tradition. One of his key concepts is the separation of the poet from the poetry, the biographical and historical person from the 'non-human reality' – the poetry, in which the poet is also identified. In this paper we attempt to place these arguments in relation to the work of Graves and Riding and the 'collaborative arrangement' outlined in the 'Preliminaries' in Volume I of *Epilogue* (1935). Riding states that the method adopted is to 'clarify a standard of reality' through a discussion which ranges from 'historical to absolute reality'. In this concern there is a correspondence between the thought of members of the Graves and Riding circle. We will discuss these ideas in relation to Reeves' notion of the poet who writes directly from experience as a corresponding equivalent to Riding's idea of locating 'the dramatic impression of finality', ideas which resurface in Graves' later critical writings, *The Crowning Privilege* (1955).

Anam Kyinat is a research student at the University of Buckingham, currently revising her PhD thesis on the 'Ghostly Sisterhood: The Supernatural Fiction of Vernon Lee, Edith Wharton and May Sinclair in an Age of Transition (1886-1926)' after a successful viva. She presented a paper on Laura Riding at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900 in 2018. She did her M.A. at the University of Bedfordshire, and previously studied English Literature at the University of the Punjab, in Lahore, Pakistan.

Stephen Rogers is a tutor and director at the Rothsay Education Centre (Bedford). He has held posts at the universities of Nottingham and Sussex, and was the research assistant for the Modernist Magazines Project and a member of the team responsible for the Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines (2009-2013). His publications include writings on Ford Madox Ford, Harold Monro, Laura Riding, John Hampson and twentieth century literary periodicals. He has published selections from the poetry of William Collins, Harold Monro and Ford Madox Ford for the Greville Press poetry pamphlets series.

Panel 4:

Nicola Nathan: 'In the Revealing Light of *The White Goddess*: Prayers to Hekate Soteira and invocations of the Divine Feminine in Contemporary Women's Poetry'

The White Goddess has been famously, and in my view erroneously, described as making 'pathological sense' – claimed as an attempt by Graves to come to terms with his relationship to both his mother and Laura Riding. This argument suggests that Graves projected the contents of his own individual troubled state of mind onto the collective and called it 'The Truth'. This is, to say the least, a limited and reductive reading of Graves's book, though certainly one commensurate with the current Age of Disenchantment. This paper will demonstrate Graves's commitment to the mythological dimension that persists in the work of poets writing in 2022, with particular reference to the writing of Fiona Benson.

Nicola Nathan has a degree in English Literature from Oxford University and is both a qualified solicitor and English teacher. Her poems have been published in magazines including *Poetry London*, *The Edinburgh Review*, *Ambit*, *Agenda*, *Wild Court* and *The High Window*. Her pamphlet, *Tiny*, was published by *The Next Review* in 2016. Original monologues (co-written with David Harsent) were performed at Chancellors Hall, Senate House, in February 2020, for an event celebrating the musical commissions of Patron of the Arts, Winnaretta Singer, Princesse de Polignac (1865 –1943). A second pamphlet, *Hekate*, was published by Dare-Gale Press in 2022

Tanja Cvetković: 'Connections between Northrop Frye and Robert Graves'

The lack of correspondence between Northrop Frye and Robert Graves does not mean that there is a lack of reference between or to their works. Though I couldn't find any written trace of direct communication between them, Frye often referred to the prolific British author in his reviews especially when weighing in Graves's contribution to the mythopoetic school of criticism. In Frye's opinion, Graves's contribution is not in creating a 'systematic mythology' but in depicting 'mythical use of poetic language, where we invent our own myths and apply them to an indefinite number of human themes'. Frye says Graves does not belong 'to the solemnly systematic mythographers'. Graves does not lead us to the objective systematic mythology since the myth in his poetry does not seem to be part of an objective system but a kaleidoscopic chaos of human fragments. It is the combination of mythical fragments that create the meaning of the poem after all while the central path to the author's mind is found through broken images. In that sense the paper shows how the absence of direct correspondence between two authors gives way to the presence of relations between their works which is mainly reflected through the way they applied the myth of the Goddess in their works.

Tanja Cvetković is Associate Professor of English language at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, Serbia. She has published scientific articles and the following books: *English for the Students of Humanities* (2016), *Between Myth and Silence: Canadian Literature, Postmodernism and Robert Kroetsch's Out West Triptych* (Beograd: Nolit, 2010); *The Journey from Slavery to Freedom in the Novels of Toni Morrison* (Niš: MB Grafika, 2008). She has translated Robert Kroetsch's *The Studhorse Man: Vlasnik Pastuva* (Beograd: Nolit, 2009) and *Gone Indian: Otišao u Indijance* (Zrenjanin: Agora, 2018) into Serbian.

Panel 5:

Joseph Bailey: “Coachmen to Chauffeurs”: Letters between Robert Graves and Basil Liddell-Hart in the Middle of the Second World War’

This exchange of letters in 1942 illustrates the concern both had on the course of the war. From the strategies used by the Allied command up until then, the armoured transport brigade that Liddell-Hart had been urging on the army since the 1920s and the prospects of a Second Front that were being played up at this time. They include an historically informed letter that Graves wrote to the *Times* urging patience in dealing with a Continental enemy and the foresight both men had before the disastrous Dieppe raid on the French coast in August 1942 that ended in great loss of life for Canadian and British servicemen. However they also involve a violent disagreement between Liddell-Hart and Graves on morale and social morality in Britain that divided them both on the nature of the German threat and the terms of any peace agreement that might be acceptable to military authorities and the civilian population. In all they provide in the space of a few months a fascinating idea of how the two men reacted to events as they unfolded using their experience and opinions and how they interacted with each other when victory in the conflict was very far from certain.

Joseph Bailey worked for a law firm specializing in the Criminal law from 1986 until 2016. He has subsequently been tutor in English literature to the Sixth Form at a school in Ham. He is a long-standing member of the Graves Society, attending his first conference at the British School in Rome in 1998. Subsequently he has given conference talks about Graves’s involvement in the reform of the criminal law of strict liability in the 1960s and the letters between Robert Graves and Basil Liddell Hart, the military historian, during WW2 at the last Oxford conference in 2016.

Candida Ridler: ‘A letter of Introduction: Robert Graves, E.M. Forster and C.P. Cavafy’

When Graves was about to take up his appointment in Egypt in January 1926 as Professor of English Literature at Cairo University, he wrote to E.M. Forster thanking him for his help in getting the job, saying: ‘I want an invitation to Cavafy before I go’. Constantine Cavafy was a Greek born poet and inhabitant of the cosmopolitan coastal city of Alexandria, Egypt, whom Forster had befriended while working as a Red Cross volunteer during the First World War. Forster was so taken with Cavafy’s poetry on his return to England, he tried to get it translated and published and he had promoted Cavafy’s works to Robert Graves. Graves had already been introduced to Cavafy’s poetry when it was published, thanks to Forster, in the small magazine *Oxford Outlook* in 1924. Forster maintained a regular correspondence with Cavafy from England. The paper will cover correspondence between Forster and Cavafy written between the years 1925 and 1927, referring to Robert Graves. Forster’s endeavours to publicize Cavafy’s poetry brought it to the attention of T.S. Eliot, Lawrence Durrell, Auden, Stephen Spender, and David Hockney, and resulted in his international fame. Despite Forster’s efforts the proposed meeting between Graves and Cavafy never materialised.

Candida Ridler retired in 2011 as Curator for the Visual Arts, British Library.

Robert Graves Society Sessions in Order of Delivery

Lucia Graves: ‘Letters between Beryl and Robert Graves’

Lucia Graves read Spanish at St Anne’s, Oxford, and has had a long career as a literary translator. Her translations into Spanish include works by Robert Graves (such as *Wife to Mr Milton*, *The Golden Fleece* and the *Collected Short Stories*), as well books by Anaïs Nin and Katherine Mansfield. Her translations into English include the novels of Carlos Ruiz Zafón’s (such as *The Shadow of the Wind*). She is the editor of Graves’s *Complete Short Stories* and has written *A Woman Unknown* – a personal account of her years in Spain – and a novel, *The Memory House*.

Jay Ansill: ‘Remembering Laura (Riding) Jackson’

Through dozens of letters and several visits, Jay Ansill became close friends with Laura (Riding) Jackson during the last seven years of her life. Jay discusses how they became friends and what she was like.

Biographical note: see under ‘Music’ below

Robert Graves Society Talk by Dunstan Ward: ‘Poetic Correspondence: Robert Graves’s Verse Letters’

Dunstan Ward retired in 2007 as Professor of English at the University of London Institute in Paris; he now teaches at the Paris centre of Columbia University. With Beryl Graves he edited the three-volume Carcanet edition of Robert Graves’s *Complete Poems* (1995–99), and the Penguin Classics edition (2003). He was president of the Robert Graves Society 2000–2010, and is a former editor of *Gravesiana*. He has written articles on Graves and edited two collections of essays, *The Art of Collaboration: Essays on Robert Graves and his Contemporaries* (2008), and *Robert Graves and the Mediterranean* (2012), and published two collections of poetry, *Beyond Puketapu* (2015) and *At This Distance* (2019), with a third forthcoming.

Philip Graves and William Graves: ‘The Robert Graves Web and Letters Project’

William: a description of how the Robert Graves Resources site, which includes the locations of Robert Graves manuscripts and letters worldwide, came about. The circumstances that led to beginning the transcription of the 10,000 or so extant letters from Graves, and making them available to researchers, students, biographers and the interested public. There are presently 1,500 letters online. Their wide geographical distribution, and the legibility of the letters, make this an essential tool for Graves studies.

Philip: we have settled of a way of transcribing, hosting and making available letters written by Robert Graves covering the period 1910 through to the early 1970s. Will show with a few examples the challenges facing anyone trying to read and interpret a letter written by Robert and that our focus is on readability and the message and information conveyed rather than the physical and visual presentation of the letter. The aim is to provide those studying Graves with a first approximation into his outgoing correspondence. From there we will take a brief look at some of the other RG websites.

William Graves is a retired petroleum geologist, Robert Graves's eldest son by his second marriage, and his Literary Executor. He is Honorary President of the Robert Graves Society, and director of the Fundació Robert Graves. As director of the Fundació he has helped organize the non-academic side of the Graves Conferences in Mallorca. Ed. of Graves's *Poems About War*, author of *Wild Olives*, *Life in Mallorca with Robert Graves*, and translator into Spanish of *The White Goddess*. He has worked and collated the data for Robert Graves Websites, and the Worldwide Location Register of Robert Graves Manuscripts and Letters Project, and more recently an integration of all these, and the presentation of an online version of Robert Graves Letters to incorporate and make available transcriptions, published and new, of all extant letters (some 10,000) which Graves wrote. <https://www.robertgraves.org/> <https://www.robertgravesholdings.org/> <https://www.robertgravesletters.org/> [robertgravesletters/ graves.palma@gmail.com](mailto:robertgravesletters@graves.palma@gmail.com)

Philip Graves obtained a Mining Engineering degree at Imperial College and after a few years working in South African mines moved back to Europe and into management consulting and eventually as a data professional. Has been providing ad-hoc technical support to William Graves for the last 20 or so years and more recently actively involved in creating, developing and administering the various Robert Graves websites which include the new Robert Graves website, the online version of the *Robert Graves Review* and the Robert Graves Letters website, the new Robert Graves Holdings website.

Mohamed-Salah Omri: 'Introduction to the holdings of St John's College, Oxford Library, the Robert Graves holdings and new accessions'

Mohamed-Salah Omri is Professor of Arabic and Comparative Literature and Tutorial Fellow at St. John's College, University of Oxford. His research covers modern Arabic literature, with a focus on the Maghreb region, comparative literature and literature and history. Website: <https://mohamedsalahomri.com/>

Charles Mundy: 'Missing Letters in the Correspondence of Robert Graves, Lynette Roberts and Keidrych Rhys'

My focus will be a sequence of letters between Lynette Roberts and Robert Graves from December 1943 to 1954 but will also include unpublished letters by T.S. Eliot. The letters between Roberts and Graves are extraordinary in their range of reference, their variety, their movement between the domestic and the professional, and provide invaluable insight into the creative processes of two different writers supporting and critiquing each other's work. Both Graves and Eliot assume unofficial elder statesmen roles and take against what they perceive to be the wilder elements of Roberts's style; in turn she asserts herself and her extraordinary range of experiences and geographies. The creative exchange of the letters is instrumental in the development of Graves's *The White Goddess*, published by Eliot's Faber in 1948, and Roberts's historical novel 'Nesta', yet to be published and until recently believed lost.

Charles Mundy is President of the Robert Graves Society and Fellow of the English Association. His edition of Robert Graves's *War Poems* was published by Seren in 2016. He is Head of the Department of Humanities at Sheffield Hallam University.

Julia Simonne: ‘The Half-finished Letter’

An exchange of letters has always been intriguing to third party readers. Correspondence between two famous names is an obvious magnet, as I assume are the salacious aspects between poet and muse. However, my own interest lies more in the poet’s outlets for inspiration and expression. For this paper, I am looking at the often hidden clues within the correspondence (Robert’s & mine) that determine which incident or image gets a ‘second life’ within a poem or essay.

Robert’s many letters to me, whilst ostensibly love letters to a muse – often enclosing a final draft of a poem or one in progress – are also detailed records of his daily life and state of mind, examples of which I will explore.

Julia Simonne was Robert Graves’s last muse and the inspiration behind more than 250 of his poems between 1966 and 1975. She has participated in two BBC radio and television documentaries on Graves, and written articles on aspects of his life and late poetry. She trained as a dancer at the Royal Ballet School, and danced with the Royal Opera Ballet, Royal Norwegian Ballet and English National Ballet, and was Principal Dancer with the Theatre Ballet of London. She is an Associate of the Royal Academy of Dance and has worked internationally as a choreographer, guest teacher and lecturer.

Music

Concert Recital: April Fredrick (soprano) and Eric McElroy (piano)

This song-recital celebrates the work of poets and composers who have been deeply influenced by Graves’s writing, and it pays tribute to the friendships and collaborations that have emerged from the activity of the Robert Graves Society. It features music by Eric McElroy and poetry by Ruth Fainlight, Gregory Leadbetter, Grevel Lindop, and Dunstan Ward, as performed by Eric McElroy (piano) and April Fredrick (soprano).

Soprano April Fredrick’s work spans period music through to song, opera, contemporary works, and devised pieces. She received wide acclaim for her world-premiere performance and recording of ‘Jane’ in John Joubert’s *Jane Eyre* with the ESO. Other work includes the world premiere of song-cycle *Le Lac* by David Matthews with the Orchestra of the Swan and a recital of American song with pianist William Vann at St John’s Smith Square. April studied at University of Northwestern St Paul and at the Royal Academy of Music, where she gained a MMus and a PhD on the late songs of Ivor Gurney.

Eric McElroy has performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe. Regarded as ‘one of the leading composer-pianists of his generation’ (Musical Opinion), Eric has become known for his song-settings of contemporary poets, including collaborations with Gregory Leadbetter, Grevel Lindop, and Ruth Fainlight, as well as song-settings of Alice Oswald, Carol Ann Duffy, and W.S. Merwin. He is currently working on a commission for the English Symphony Orchestra, and Somm Recordings is producing a CD of Eric’s song-cycles with James Gilchrist for release in 2022. Eric received his Bachelor’s degree at Washington State University, his Master’s at Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität der Stadt Wien, and a postgraduate diploma under Mark Bebbington and Margaret Fingerhut at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. He teaches at Oxford’s Dragon School, is the editor of the

Arthur Bliss Society Journal, and is a doctorate candidate and Tutor at the University of Oxford.

'Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme; Songs of Gravesian Significance' Jay Ansill, Claudia Balant and friends

Jay Ansill has been playing music professionally since he was a teenager. He has toured throughout North America and Europe and has performed in a wide variety of musical genres, from jazz to rock to bluegrass to classical to traditional music from America, Britain, Ireland and Catalonia. He even played with a Goth punk band for a while. He has worked extensively as a composer for theater in Philadelphia and New York, most notably with the playwrights John Guare, Laura Eason and Lee Breuer.

Claudia Balant is an artist, teacher and singer in Bucks County PA. While studying at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, she developed a substantial following singing in clubs in the Philadelphia area. In recent years, music has taken a back seat to painting and teaching, but her clear and powerful voice can still move listeners.

Poetry Biographies (where not previously given)

Ruth Fainlight has published thirteen collections of poems, two volumes of short stories, and translations including poems by Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, and Sophocles's Theban Plays (with Robert Littman). Her books appear in French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish translation. She received the Hawthornden and Cholmondeley Awards in 1994, and is Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Her collection *Sugar-Paper Blue* was short-listed for the 1998 Whitbread Award. She has written libretti for the Royal Opera House and Channel 4. Bloodaxe publish her *New & Collected Poems* (2010), and her collection, *Somewhere Else Entirely* (2018).

Sean O'Brien's most recent book of poems is *It Says Here*, published by Picador in 2020. His new collection, his eleventh, *Embark*, will be published in autumn 2022. He is the recipient of the T.S. Eliot, Forward and E.M Forster prizes. His recent work includes *Abai*, translations of the complete poems of the Kazakh national poet Abai Kunanbayuli (CUP, 2020) and *This is the Life: Selected Poems* by Alistair Elliot, which he edited (Shoestring, 2021). He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and Emeritus Professor of Creative Writing at Newcastle University.