States of Independence 2023 Saturday 18th March Programme

10.30 -11. 15 Keynote: Lydia Towsey: *What Keeps Us Going*? *Room: Clephan 3.01*			
11.30 am – 12.15 pm	Shearsman Poetry readings with Geraldine Clarkson and Andrew Taylor *Room: Clephan 2.33*	Poetry reading and talk: Writing for wellbeing with Cathy Grindrod *Room: Clephan 3.08*	Developing your practice as writers and publishers Panel discussion with Matt Vaughan, Peter Stones, Arts Council England and Leicester Centre for Creative Writing *Room: Clephan 3.02*	'Labour Lost' - a Film and Poetry project and screening With Deborah Tyler Bennet, Jacqui Gallon *Room: Clephan 2.32*
12.30 – 1.15 pm	Readings from Leicester's Independent poetry scene Carol Leeming, Bobba Bennett & a special guest *Room: Clephan 3.02*	An audience with a Dungeon Master Robert Bradley *Room: Clephan 2.35*	Demon Crew book Launch: DMU students, Rod Duncan, and Simon Perril *Room: Clephan 3.01*	Flash fiction workshop with Laura Besley Limited spaces. Sign up at the welcome desk. *Room: Clephan 2.33*
1.15 - 1.55 PM LUNCH			
2 – 2.45 PM	Creating immersive literary experiences with Tim Grayson and guests *Room: Clephan 3.02*		AI Chatbots and writing – something to fear or welcome? Tracy Harwood, Simon Perril *Room: Clephan 3.08*	Space Cat Press workshop: Writing into the Forest Limited spaces. Sign up at the welcome desk. *Room: Clephan 3.07*
3 – 3.45 PM	Role-Play, Word-building and Site-Specificity: a new Cultural Mode? With Hugo Worthy, Rob Bradley, Jamie Harper, and Rod Duncan *Room: Clephan 3.01*	Writing short stories and getting them published Teika Marija Smits, Andrew Hook, Rebecca Burns *Room: Clephan 2.33*	Richard III and Disaster Patriarchy Emma Wilde *Room: Clephan 3.07*	Using AI in Creative Writing – an experimental workshop No need to sign up. Tracy Harwood, Simon Perril *Room: Clephan 3.08*

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10.30 -11. 15am Keynote: Lydia Towsey: What Keeps Us Going?

We're delighted to open States 2023 with a keynote and reading from Lydia Towsey - poet, performer, and Creative Director of WORD!, one of the longest running poetry nights in the UK. Lydia will talk to the festival theme 'What Keeps Us Going?' *Room: Clephan 3.01*

11.30 am – 12.15 pm

Shearsman Poetry Readings with Geraldine Clarkson and Andrew Taylor *Room: Clephan 2.33*

Poetry reading and talk: Writing for Wellbeing with Cathy Grindrod
Cathy Grindrod will read from her new poetry collection, *Surrender*, and talk about how writing affects her wellbeing and vice versa. She will also share what led her to developing her organisation, The Writer Highway. **Room: Clephan 3.08**

Developing your practice as writers and publishers: Panel discussion with Matt Vaughan, Peter Stones, and Leicester Centre for Creative Writing
What assistance is out there for writers and publishers wanting to develop their work or business? Join us for a discussion on pathways and support available from Leicester Libraries, Arts Council England, and local universities – and how to to access them. *Room: Clephan 3.02*

'Labour Lost' - a Film and Poetry project and screening with Deborah Tyler Bennet and Jacqui Gallon
Come and hear Poet Deborah Tyler Bennet, and Jacqui Gallon from Pudding Bag Productions talk about, and screen, their collaborative project based on pictures of servants from the Nanpantan Hall archive. What are the challenges of such project work? Come along and find out. *Room: Clephan 2.32*

12.30 – 1.15 pm

Readings from Leicester's Independent poetry scene, with Carol Leeming, Bobba Bennett & special guests.
Leicester has one of the liveliest poetry scenes in the UK – come and let Carol Leeming, Bobba Bennett & special guests demonstrate how and why. Readings and discussion. *Room: Clephan 3.02*

An audience with a Dungeon Master
In late 2019 Professional Game Master Robert Bradley established Rolldark, a national agency facilitating Dungeons and Dragons sessions for players across the UK, and beyond. In this session Rob will talk about his experiences of tabletop roleplay games and what a force for good he believes they can be. *Room: Clephan 2.35*

Demon Crew book launch (DMU students, Rod Duncan, Simon Perril)
The annual States of Independence reading by students of creative writing at De Montfort launching (and selling!) their publications. Come and share the excitement, the triumph, and the sheer diversity of creative work. *Room: Clephan 3.01*

Storytelling in Small Spaces: a flash fiction workshop with Laura Besley
How can you tell a story with fully-formed characters readers will care about in fewer than 1000 words? This workshop is an opportunity to explore the fundamental elements of storytelling - character(s), place and plot - in the form of flash fiction. *Limited spaces please book at the welcome desk on arrival or via Eventbrite*. *Room: Clephan 2.33*

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1.15 - 1.55 PM   **LUNCH** Why not take a visit to DMU's Coffee House café?

2 – 2.45 pm

Creating immersive literary experiences with Tim Grayson and guests
Writers, publishers and other creative professionals have always sought ways to stand out from the crowd. Anybody with a phone can harness the social tools to demonstrate exactly why their new project is worthwhile, but attention-spans are fickle, and whatever does not immediately grab attention can easily be missed. Our panellists Nathan Lunt, Kerry McKeon, Nathan Leverton will discuss what they've learned from decades of in-person events, and how an audience's desire for real-life connection with creations (and their creators) could be the key to attract new readers and immerse existing fans. Moderated by Tim Grayson. *Room: Clephan 3.02*

AI Chatbots and writing – something to fear or welcome? with Tracy Harwood and Simon Perril
As AI writing bots gain in both sophistication and media coverage, what does this mean for the creative community? Professor of digital culture, Tracy Harwood, and poet Simon Perril, explore the opportunities this new era presents for a reassessment of 'creative' work.
Room: *Clephan 3.08*

Writing into the Forest workshop with Siobhan Logan
Space Cat Press editor, Siobhan Logan, will use short exercises to inspire forest-themed writing in any genre. We will explore immersive writing, the place of forests in our fables and finding characters or creatures under the trees. Potentially this could spark a piece to submit for Space Cat Press' next anthology theme, opening March-May 2023**.** *Limited spaces please book at the welcome desk on arrival or via Eventbrite. Room: Clephan 3.07*

3 – 3.45 pm

Role-Play, Word-building and Site-Specificity: a new Cultural Mode? With Hugo Worthy, Rob Bradley, Jamie Harper, and Rod Duncan
This panel discussion explores table-top roleplay games and worldbuilding as a mode of cultural production, its potential in terms of heritage engagement and as therapeutic experience for participants. *Room: Clephan 3.01*

Writing short stories and getting them published with Teika Marija Smits, Andrew Hook, and Rebecca Burns
The short story has an enduring appeal to both reader and writer. But what makes for a successful, and publishable, short story? Join authors Rebecca Burns, Andrew Hook and Teika Marija Smits as they discuss the craft of writing short stories and how to go about finding a publisher for an individual short story or collection. *Room: Clephan 2.33*

Richard III and Disaster Patriarchy with Emma Wilde
In 2021, The Guardian declared that "the pandemic has unleashed a war on women." Come and hear writer and PhD student, Emma Wilde, explore how revisiting Shakespeare's *Richard III* is the perfect creative vehicle for exploring, and exposing, the dynamics of 'disaster patriarchy'. *Room: Clephan 3.07*

Using AI in Creative Writing – an experimental workshop with Tracy Harwood and Simon Perril
Bring laptops and phones for an experimental workshop where we play with the bots – where can this digital revolution take your writing practice? Let's collaborate on some ideas. With Professor of digital culture, Tracy Harwood, and poet Simon Perril. *Room: Clephan 3.08*