



The John Hewitt Digital Festival of Literature & Ideas

Monday 27 July – Saturday 1 August 2020
Online at johnhewittsociety.org

Welcome

Welcome to the 33rd John Hewitt International Summer School - and our first ever virtual Summer School as The John Hewitt Digital Festival of Literature & Ideas.

As usual we have drawn our inspiration from a John Hewitt poem.

From :- **For a Moment of Darkness Over the Nations.**

*"The black cloud
is a happy portent
for dwellers in the drylands
waiting for the monsoon."*

Even in darkest times, John Hewitt could try to extract some cheer. In our present crisis can the arts help us to see a brighter present and better future?

I hope you like the programme and that it will bring some cheer. Although we will miss the usual friendliness of contacts over the week, we have been able to attract some high quality contributors.

Our programme is in two parts. Talks, recitals, and discussions are free and run from Thursday 30 July to Saturday 1 August. They are complemented by creative writing classes on Monday 27, Wednesday 29 and Friday 31 July with a fee for the three classes of £60 in total. Places on the classes should be registered in advance.

However, a plea. These are hard times for the arts, and The John Hewitt Society is no exception. Although the events are free, they come at a cost to us. If you can, please consider making a donation to allow us to continue entertaining and challenging you. Visit our website for details of how to support us.

Better still - why not become a Friend? This will allow us to keep in touch with you, and a regular donation of £5 a month - that's the cost of two cups of coffee - will entitle you to a 10% discount on stock books from our partner, No Alibis bookshop.

We are excited to be undertaking this venture and we hope that old friends and new will tune in and enjoy our programme.

Tony Kennedy
Chair, The John Hewitt Society



The Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre Armagh

The Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre Armagh is extremely proud to be the host venue of the John Hewitt International Summer School Literary & Arts Festival. On an annual basis, many hundreds of people come to our beautiful city to be challenged, enlightened, enthralled and entertained by its myriad of activities.

Unfortunately, since March, the world has changed in a way that no-one could have possibly imagined. No individual has been unaffected by the Coronavirus, and yet society has come together to find new ways of working, communicating and engaging with each other.

Like all other arts & cultural venues, The Market Place closed its doors when the pandemic struck. The Festival, too, cannot take place in its normal guise. However, reflecting the eternal nature of dialogue, the festival is continuing in a virtual form and we applaud the organisers for continuing.

We will truly miss this year's opportunity to host one of our key events, but we all look forward to the last week in July 2021 with renewed determination and excitement.

Vincent McCann
Theatre Director (Acting),
The Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre Armagh



How to Access The Festival

1

Look through the programme that follows.

2

Decide on the event, or events, that you wish to view online.

3

To register for an event, just follow the link.
You'll be asked for your name and an email address.

4

Prior to each event, a link will be sent to that email address
on the day.

5

Sign in and enjoy!

johnhewittsociety.org

All online events are free to view.

Starting times for all events are GMT.

At a Glance

Thursday 30th July

4.00pm

Panel Discussion:

After lockdown, can the arts return to health without a vaccine?

Róisín McDonough, CEO, ACNI

Maureen Kennelly, Dir, AC |ACE

Mary Nagele, CEO, A&B

John Campbell, BBC NI

Alan Meban, Slugger O'Toole (Chair)

5.30pm.

Poetry: Gallery Goes with...

Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin

Tom French

Vona Groarke

Introduced by Nessa O'Mahony

7.30pm

Donal Ryan in conversation with Michael Hughes

Friday 31st July

4.00pm

Talk: The Four Horsemen of the Modern Apocalypse

by Misha Glenny, followed by discussion with Cahal Dallat

5.30pm

Eimear McBride in conversation with Jan Carson

7.30pm

Poetry Gala with...

Terrance Hayes

Mona Arshi

Introduced by Paul Maddern

Saturday 1st August

4.00pm

Going Equipped with a Pen

Poems written by students from the Prison Arts Foundation

5.30pm

Out of My Time: John Hewitt on Brexit, COVID, shifting borders and altered identities?

A panel discussion with...

Gerry Dawe

Heather Richardson

and Cahal Dallat (Chair)

7.30pm

Marita Conlon-McKenna in conversation with Martina Devlin

Workshops

Monday 27th, Wednesday 29th, Friday 30th July

2.30-4.30pm

Creative Writing Workshops

3x 2hour online workshops: Fee £60

W/s 1: Bernie McGill - Novel Writing: First Chapters

W/s 2: Maureen Boyle - Memoir

W/s 3: Heather Richardson - Getting Started

W/s 4: Edward Hogan - The Short Story

W/s 5: Nessa O'Mahony - Poetry

THURSDAY 30 JULY, 4.00PM

Panel Discussion: After lockdown, can the arts return to health without a vaccine?

Sluggie O'Toole makes its annual pilgrimage out of Belfast to record an episode of its monthly Sluggie TV discussion show for NvTv at the John Hewitt International Summer School, albeit virtually this year! Hosted by political and arts commentator Alan Meban. Supported by Sluggie O'Toole | sluggerotoole.com



Roisín McDonough

*CEO, The Arts Council of Northern Ireland
artscouncil-ni.org*

Roisín McDonough took up the post as Chief Executive of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in October 2000. She has worked in central and local government as well as in the community and voluntary sector throughout her career. Roisín is a passionate advocate for the role the arts play in bringing communities together as well as their inherent value to us as individuals.



Mary Nagele

*CEO, Arts and Business NI
artsandbusinessni.org.uk*

Mary is CEO of Arts & Business NI. Previously she was Head of Marketing & Development at the Ulster Orchestra and Lyric Theatre Belfast and Marketing Manager at the Grand Opera House. She also worked in the private sector for Bass Brewers NI and marketing leisure services in Manchester. Mary is a Trustee and NI board representative on Creative & Cultural Skills UK.



Maureen Kennelly

*Director, Arts Council, An Chomhairle
Ealaíon_artsCouncil.ie*

Maureen Kennelly was director of Poetry Ireland from 2013 until she commenced her role as Director of the Arts Council in April this year. Previous roles include, director of Kilkenny Arts Festival, artistic director at Mermaid Arts Centre, and with Fishamble Theatre Company, Druid Theatre Company, the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival, The Arts Council and the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland. On a freelance basis, she worked with Theatre Forum, Sing Ireland, the Performance Corporation and Age & Opportunity, and was Curator with the Mountains to Sea DLR Book Festival and Programme Director with Cúirt International Festival of Literature.



John Campbell

BBC Northern Ireland's Economics & Business Editor.

John Campbell is Economics and Business editor for BBC Northern Ireland, a position he has held since September 2013. Prior to that he was a senior BBC producer working across TV, Radio and Online with special responsibility for business coverage. He began his career on the Liverpool Daily Post and Echo.



Alan Meban (Chair)

Alan Meban is a Belfast-based freelance journalist and arts/politics blogger who reports from, live-tweets and live-streams civic, academic and political events; delivers social media training/coaching; produces podcasts; FactCheckNI director; a member of Ofcom's Advisory Committee for Northern Ireland; and a member of the Corrymeela Community.

**Register and Book
Tickets Here**

THURSDAY 30 JULY, 5.30PM

Poetry 1: Gallery Goes with...

Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Tom French and Vona Groarke, introduced and interviewed by Nessa O'Mahony. Supported by The Gallery Press | gallerypress.com. The Gallery Press received funding towards this online Gallery Goes Poetry event from the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.



Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin

Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin was born in Cork City and educated there and at Oxford before spending her working life as an academic in Trinity College, Dublin. She was a founder member of Cyphers, a literary journal.

Her collections include *The Girl Who Married the Reindeer*, *The Sun-fish*, *The Boys of Bluehill* and *The Mother House*. Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin is a Fellow and Professor of English (Emeritus) at Trinity College, Dublin and a member of Aosdána. She was Ireland Professor of Poetry (2016-2019)



Tom French

Tom French was born in Kilkenny in 1966. He graduated from National University of Ireland, Galway and the University of Limerick.

His first collection *Touching the Bones* was awarded the Forward Prize for Best First Collection, 2002. The Gallery Press has also published *The Fire Step*, *Midnightstown*, *The Way to Work* and *The Last Straw*. *The Sea Field* was published in April 2020. Tom French lives with his family close to the coast of County Meath where he earns his living in the County library service.



Vona Groarke

Vona Groarke was born in the Irish Midlands in 1964. She attended Trinity College, Dublin and University College, Cork. A member of Aosdána she was selected as a Cullman Center Fellow at the New York Public Library 2018/19 and currently teaches in the Centre for New Writing at the University of Manchester.

Her collections published by The Gallery Press include *Shale*, *Other People's Houses*, *Flight*, *Juniper Street*, *Spindrift*, *X*, *Selected Poems* and *Four Sides Full*. *Double Negative* was published in 2019.



Nessa O'Mahony

Nessa O'Mahony is a Dublin-born poet. She has published five books of poetry – *Bar Talk*, appeared (1999), *Trapping a Ghost* (2005), *In Sight of Home* (2009), *Her Father's Daughter* (2014), and *The Hollow Woman on the Island*, published by Salmon 2019. O'Mahony won the National Women's Poetry Competition and was shortlisted for the Patrick Kavanagh Prize and Hennessy Literature Awards. She was awarded an Arts Council of Ireland literature bursary in 2004, 2011 and 2018. Books are available on nessaomahony.com/shop

**Register and Book
Tickets Here**

THURSDAY 30 JULY, 7.30PM

Fiction 1: Donal Ryan in conversation with Michael Hughes

Register and Book
Tickets Here

Donal Ryan is from Nenagh in County Tipperary. His first four novels, *The Spinning Heart*, *The Thing About December*, *All We Shall Know* and *From a Low and Quiet Sea* have all been published to major acclaim. *The Spinning Heart* won the Guardian First Book Award, the EU Prize for Literature (Ireland), and Book of the Year at the Irish Book Awards; it was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize and the Desmond Elliott Prize, and was voted 'Irish Book of the Decade'.

His latest novel, *Strange Flowers*, is a beautifully moving, literary story of a family devastated by a sudden disappearance and transformed by a miraculous return. Beautiful and devastating, this exploration of loss, alienation and the redemptive power of love reaffirms Donal Ryan as one of the most talented and empathetic writers at work today.

Donal Ryan will read from *Strange Flowers* and discuss his work with **Michael Hughes**, the acclaimed author of *Country* and *The Countenance Divine*. A successful stage and screen actor, Michael Hughes teaches Creative Writing at Queen Mary University of London.

"One of the finest writers writing in Ireland today." - John Burnside

"His paragraphs are always unnoticeably beautiful, his heart is always on show, and he writes with a social accuracy that is devastating." - Anne Enright

"Enthrallingly impassioned and compassionate ... ferocious but humane." - Colin Barrett



FRIDAY 31 JULY, 4.00PM



Talk: The Four Horsemen of the Modern Apocalypse by Misha Glenny

followed by discussion with Cahal Dallat

The Four Horsemen of the Modern Apocalypse... a talk by Misha Glenny, award winning writer, broadcaster, and commentator. In it he addresses the most pressing issues facing the international order today, and considers the capacity of governments to tackle them. Followed by discussion with Cahal Dallat.

Misha Glenny is an award-winning journalist and historian whose books have been published around the world in over 30 languages. He established his reputation as the BBC's Central Europe Correspondent with overall responsibility for the radio coverage of the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe and the wars in the former Yugoslavia. More recently he has developed an unparalleled expertise in the areas of global organized crime, corruption and cyber security. He has advised governments and corporates on cyber security. He has worked as a Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics, Columbia University in New York, and, most recently, University College London. A sought-after keynote speakers in the United Kingdom, he is currently a Research Fellow at the Berggruen Institute in Los Angeles.

Cahal Dallat, poet, musician, critic (b. Ballycastle, Co. Antrim), BBC Radio 4 Saturday Review contributor; winner, 2017 Keats-Shelley Prize; founder/organiser of WB Yeats Bedford Park Artwork Project; 2019 joint Writer-in-Residence (with Anne-Marie Fyfe) at Lenoir-Rhyne University (Hickory NC); 2018 Harry Ransom Center Research Fellow, University of Texas (Austin TX). Latest poetry collection, *The Year of Not Dancing* (Blackstaff Press); forthcoming, *Beautiful Lofty Things* (Salmon Poetry, Spring 2021).cahaldallat.com

Register and Book
Tickets Here

FRIDAY 31 JULY, 5.30PM



Fiction 2: Eimear McBride in conversation with Jan Carson

Eimear McBride is one of Ireland's most exciting novelists. Her debut novel *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* received a number of awards including the Goldsmiths Prize, the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction and Irish Novel of the Year. Her second book, *The Lesser Bohemians* (2017) was equally well-received, winning the 2017 James Tait Black Memorial Prize, as well as being shortlisted for the Goldsmiths Prize and the International Dublin Literary Award.

Her urgent and immersive new novel, *Strange Hotel* is an indelible portrait of a woman's mind as she wrestles with her desires and memories. Intricately constructed, it is a novel of enduring emotional force.

Eimear will be in conversation with Belfast-based novelist, short story writer and community arts facilitator, **Jan Carson**. Her acclaimed novel, *The Fire Starters*, was shortlisted for many awards and won her the Irish winner of the European Prize for Literature 2019.

"Strange Hotel already has the stamp of immortality on it. A deep dissection of desire and aloneness, in its familiarity and strangeness, it seems even newer and more radical than McBride's previous novels. As Anne Enright has said, she is something of a genius." - Sebastian Barry

"McBride is on blistering form" - Sinéad Gleeson

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Tickets Here

FRIDAY 31 JULY, 7.30PM

Poetry Gala with Terrance Hayes & Mona Arshi Introduced and interviewed by Paul Maddern

Leading poets **Terrance Hayes** (USA) and Mona Arshi (England) join host **Paul Maddern** (JHS committee member) to read their work and answer questions posed by those subscribed to the broadcast. Supported by Poetry Ireland.



Terrance Hayes is one of America's foremost poets and his seven collections have met with widespread critical acclaim, earning him a National Book Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Pushcart Prize. His recent collection, *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin*, was shortlisted for the T S Eliot Award and the National Book Award and confirmed both his reputation for formal inventiveness as well as his address of racism in American society.



Mona Arshi worked as a Human rights lawyer for a decade before she started writing poetry. Her debut collection, *Small Hands* (Pavilion Poetry, Liverpool University Press) won the Forward Prize for best first collection in 2015. Her poems and interviews have been published in many magazines including The Times, The Guardian, The Times of India as well as on the London Underground. In 2015 Sathnam Sanghera from the Times described Mona as 'nothing less than Britain's most promising writer.' Her second collection *Dear Big Gods*, will be published by Pavilion Poetry in April 2019.



Paul Maddern is a committee member of the John Hewitt Society. He has four publications with Templar Poetry, the most recent being *The Tipping Line* (2018). His poem, *Effacé*, is on the Northern Ireland GCSE syllabus and he has two Bermuda Government Literary Awards. He is the proprietor of The River Mill Writers Retreat in Co. Down: the-river-mill.co.uk.

Register and Book
Tickets Here

SATURDAY 1 AUGUST, 4.00PM



Going Equipped with a Pen

A recording of poems written by students from the Prison Arts Foundation

Join us for a unique event as we explore poetry written by students participating in creative writing programmes through the Prison Arts Foundation. (PAF). Creative writing allows us to communicate our interests, our stories and our experiences. The PAF residency classes not only give the student a creative learning experience but the atmosphere of the class produces finished works with writings, paintings, music, ceramics and other forms as a way to showcase achievements, enabling the augmentation and communication of ideas.

Creativity offers a fresh viewpoint, a way to move beyond isolation, challenges and develop a method of learning that suits any individual. We become somebody we never knew we could be, somebody new through creativity.

'Going equipped with a pen' will encourage participants to learn more about life within prisons through the exploration of themes relating to incarceration, solitude, drugs and mental health.

Thanks to Fred Caulfield of PAF who has been crucial to making this event possible. Facilitated by William Redpath – JHS Committee member.

**Register and Book
Tickets Here**

SATURDAY 1 AUGUST, 5.30PM

Panel Discussion: Out of My Time. John Hewitt on Brexit, COVID, shifting borders and altered identities?

John Hewitt's radical vision for the region and its relationships - with the rest of Ireland and with the rest of the United Kingdom - was ahead of its time: Dublin-based Belfast poet and academic, Gerald Dawe, Belfast novelist and lecturer Heather Richardson, and London-based Ballycastle-born poet and critic, Cahal Dallat, discuss Hewitt's poetry and what it can or can't tell us about community, identity, and the importance of the arts in our own fraught times. Introduced and chaired by Cahal Dallat.



Gerald Dawe, Professor of English and Fellow of Trinity College Dublin until his retirement in 2017, was founding director of the Oscar Wilde Centre (1998-2015) and, with Brendan Kennelly, established the Trinity College Masters programme in Creative Writing. He has published eight Gallery Press poetry collections from *The Lundys Letter* (1985) to *Mickey Finn's Air* (2014) as well as publishing essays, *Of War and War's Alarms* (2015), and editing the anthologies *Earth Voices Whispering: Irish Poetry of War 1914-1945* (2008) and *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Poets* (2018).



Heather Richardson's fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction has been published in magazines in the UK, Ireland, Europe and Australia. She has published two novels, *Magdeburg* (Lagan Press, 2010), and *Doubting Thomas* (Vagabond Voices, 2017). She is also a visual artist, whose work combines words and textiles to explore memory and history. Her textile work has been exhibited at the Island Arts Centre in Lisburn, and the F E McWilliams Gallery in Banbridge. She lectures in Creative Writing at the Open University.



Cahal Dallat, poet, musician, critic (b. Ballycastle, Co. Antrim), BBC Radio 4 Saturday Review contributor; winner, 2017 Keats-Shelley Prize; founder/organiser of WB Yeats Bedford Park Artwork Project; 2019 joint Writer-in-Residence (with Anne-Marie Fyfe) at Lenoir-Rhyne University (Hickory NC); 2018 Harry Ransom Center Research Fellow, University of Texas (Austin TX). Latest poetry collection, *The Year of Not Dancing* (Blackstaff Press); forthcoming, *Beautiful Lofty Things* (Salmon Poetry, Spring 2021). cahaldallat.com

Register and Book
Tickets Here

SATURDAY 1 AUGUST, 7.30PM

Fiction 3: Marita Conlon- McKenna in conversation with Martina Devlin

Marita Conlon McKenna is an award winning writer of fiction whose novels regularly top the best-seller list. Her first book, *Under the Hawthorn Tree* – set during Ireland's Great Famine – has become a children's classic, now widely translated and published. As well as other highly successful children's books, Marita also writes for adults and her other fiction works include *The Magdalen*, *The Stone House* and *Rebel Sisters*.

Marita has returned to the Great Irish Famine for her new epic adult novel, *The Hungry Road*, an absorbing tale of endurance, heroism, compassion, love and survival during Ireland's darkest days. Marita will read from "The Hungry Road" and talk about it and other work with Martina Devlin, author, journalist and host of the City of Books podcast for Dublin UNESCO City of Literature. Martina's recent fiction includes *Truth and Dare: Short Stories about Women Who Shaped Ireland* and *The House Where It Happened*.



**Register and Book
Tickets Here**

MONDAY 27, WEDNESDAY 29 & FRIDAY 30 JULY, 2.30-4.30PM

Workshops

Creative Writing Workshops: 3x 2hour online workshops. **Fee £60**



Novel Writing: First Chapters - Bernie McGill

Bernie McGill is the author of two novels, *The Butterfly Cabinet* and *The Watch House* and *Sleepwalkers*. Her short fiction has appeared in anthologies *Her Other Language*, *Belfast Stories*, *The Long Gaze Back*, *The Glass Shore* and *Female Lines*.



Memoir - Maureen Boyle

Maureen Boyle's debut poetry collection, *The Work of a Winter*, was shortlisted for the Strong/Shine Poetry Prize in 2019. Her poem *Strabane*, originally commissioned for Radio 4, with photographs by her husband Malachi O'Doherty, has just been published by Arlen House Press.



Getting Started - Heather Richardson

Heather Richardson's fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction has been published in magazines in the UK, Ireland, Europe and Australia. In 2000 she was winner of the Brian Moore Short Story Award. She has published two novels, *Magdeburg*, and *Doubting Thomas*. Supported by The Open University.



The Short Story - Edward Hogan

Edward Hogan's novels include *Blackmoor* and *The Hunger Trace*. His recent stories have been highly commended in the Seán Ó Faoláin Short Story Competition, the Costa Short Story Award, and longlisted for the 2020 Sunday Times Audible Short Story Award. Supported by The Open University.



Poetry for Beginners Workshop - Nessa O'Mahony

Nessa O'Mahony is a Dublin-born poet. She has published five books of poetry – *Bar Talk*, *Trapping a Ghost*, *In Sight of Home*, *Her Father's Daughter*, and *The Hollow Woman on the Island*. O'Mahony won the National Women's Poetry Competition in 1997. Supported by The Open University.

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Workshops

To pay the £60 workshops fee.

- Choose your workshop.
- Click on Book, register with your name and email address
- To pay, follow the link to Pay pal.
- You will need a credit card for payment.

Events

All events are free, just choose your event and register with your name and email address.

Donations

We recognise that this is a difficult time for many of us.

However, if you are able to consider making a donation, it would be hugely appreciated, just follow the link when you register.

You will need a credit card.

Become a Friend of the John Hewitt Society

Friends of the John Hewitt Society are passionate about Literature, Poetry and Prose.

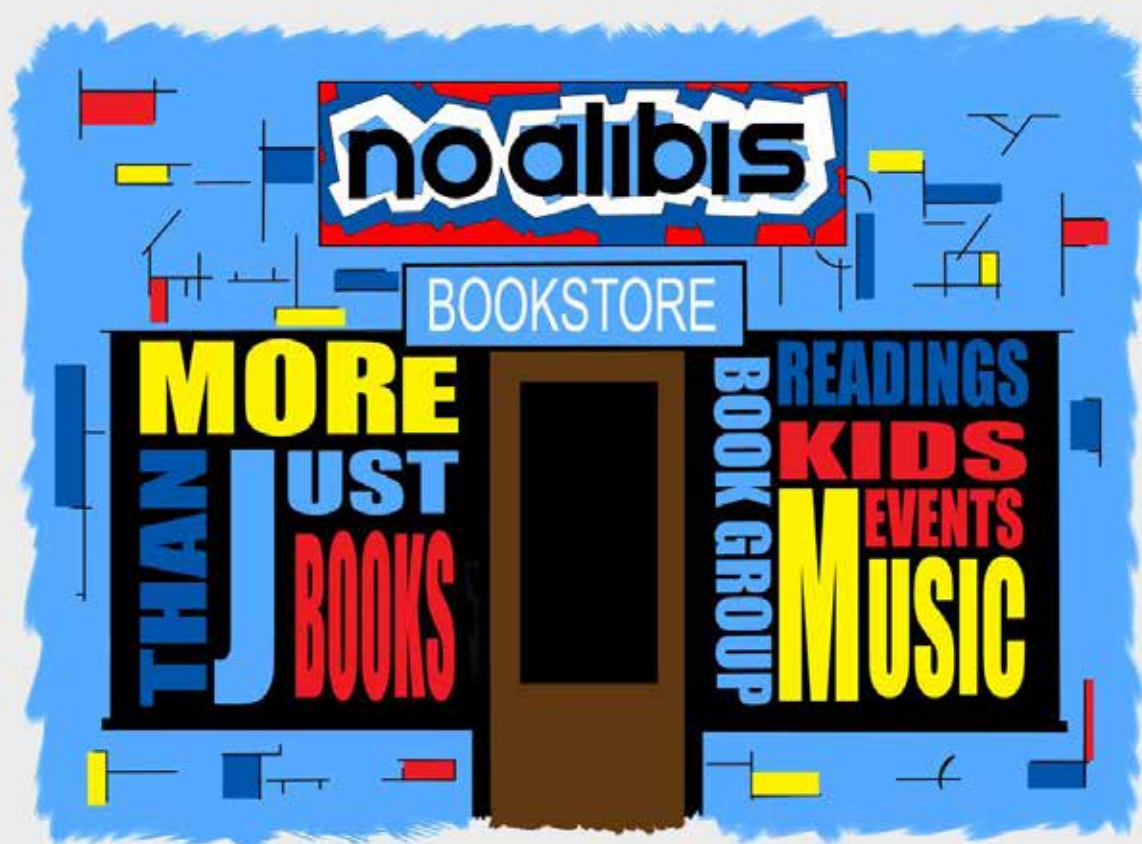
Becoming our Friend is a great way for you to keep in touch with us and to provide long-term support helping to ensure the Society's future, especially during these challenging times which has saw activities cancelled or seriously limited, and income fall significantly. We are thankful to so many of you who support our Festival year after year. Please help us sustain this Festival and plan for the future? johnhewittsociety.org

No Alibis

Hello from **No Alibis Bookstore Belfast** and partner with **The John Hewitt Society**.

Look forward to meeting you all again in person in Armagh 2021, until then do come see us in the shop, or shop online at noalibis.com.

All **Friends of The John Hewitt Society** get a 10% discount on any books in stock in our book store. So join now!

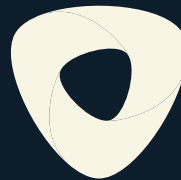


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the John Hewitt Society

The John Hewitt Society promotes literature, arts, and cultural activities inspired by the ideals and ideas of the Belfast born poet John Hewitt (1907. 1987)

The John Hewitt Society offers opportunities for people from Northern Ireland and beyond to use literature, art and culture to explore issues of difference and identity. The Society actively promotes cross-community and cross-border links, creating events to encourage debate, understanding, tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity.

Board, Committee & Staff

Chair: Tony Kennedy, OBE Director: Patricia Morris

Alex Catherwood | Ryan Cornett | Cahal Dallat | Aoife Fee | Anne-Marie Fyfe | Stephen Gordon | Dr. Myrtle Hill | Bill Jeffrey | Naomi Leitch | Dr. Paul Maddern | Dr. Tess Maginness | Paul McAvinchey | William Redpath | Dr. Martin Tyrrell

Festival Assistant: Rachel Toner

Web design: Stephen Gordon

Social media consultant: Andrew Moore

Tech: BNL Productions

Graphic design: Rinky | rinkydesign.com

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