



Jul 03, 2017 11:47 BST

The Future of English

Academics from Northumbria's Humanities department are helping lead a national English Studies conference in Newcastle this week.

English: Shared Futures is bringing together writers, critics, academics, teachers, and linguists in a festival that has been described as part celebration, part conversation, part conference and part cultural fringe event. Organisers believe it is the first time that all the branches of English – literature, language and creative writing – have come together to talk about and celebrate their subject. Co-organised by Northumbria's English and Creative Writing academics, the conference is being held in Newcastle to mark the city's rich literary and cultural history.

Featuring more than 150 panels, readings and workshops across the city, this major conference aims to explore the future of English in the UK and across the world. It has been organised by the English Association and University English and is supported by the National Association of Writers in Education, the Institute of English Studies, and the Higher Education Academy. The conference will take place from 5-7 July at Newcastle Civic Centre, with overflow sessions scheduled at Northumbria University on each day. There will also be events at Newcastle University, Quilliams Brothers Tea House, the Literary & Philosophical Society, and other venues across the city.

Northumbria is one of five North East universities on the organising committee, alongside Newcastle, Durham, Teesside and Sunderland, with a number of staff from the University's English and Creative Writing course involved in panels and sessions. There will also be five postgraduate interns from Northumbria working at the conference. In addition, Hannah Humes, a Northumbria PhD student in English Literature, is running a Fringe event workshop, entitled 'The Materiality of Books Workshop' at the Lit & Phil on Wednesday 5 July from 4-5:30pm.

One of the keynote events - *the Plenary Panel: Literary Biography: Andrew Hadfield, Kathryn Hughes, Martin Stannard* - will take place on Wednesday at 2pm at Newcastle Civic Centre and is presented by *English: The Journal of the English Association*. Northumbria's Reader in English Studies, Katherine Baxter, and Professor of English, David Walker, are the general editors of the journal, along with an editorial team from English at Northumbria, which includes Tony Williams, Adam Hansen, and Allan Ingram.

Katherine, who is on the organising committee for this week's conference, said: "English: Shared Futures really highlights the exciting and diverse scholarship in English Studies today. We're delighted in Humanities at Northumbria to be contributing to every area of this conference from organising, presenting papers and hosting sessions, to engaging with the wider community in Newcastle with our programme of Fringe events.

"English Studies, whether Literature, Linguistics, or Creative Writing, is a discipline that has the power to transform lives. This conference celebrates that transformative power and asks how English can shape our futures. And, of course, Newcastle is the ideal city in which to host such a conference. We have such a rich literary, linguistic and creative heritage on our doorstep, from the Lit & Phil to the People's Theatre to the Multilingual Library.

'English: Shared Futures' will be a celebration of the city too."

Other panels and sessions at the conference include talks by Deborah Cameron on 'Language and the problem of female authority', Bernardine Evaristo reading and answering questions, Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy in conversation with Jackie Kay, and a pioneering a series of 'literary salons'. These will feature Marina Warner, Elleke Boehmer, John Mullan, and Dinah Birch, who will talk about their lives in literature and the literature in their lives.

English: Shared Futures is being staged in Newcastle to help showcase the excellent literary culture of the region, its writers and publishers, and to join in with the 50th anniversary commemorations of Newcastle University's awarding Dr Martin Luther King an honorary degree in 1967.

Northumbria's Humanities department is among the best in the UK, with research in English and History ranked in the UK Top 20 following the REF 2014, and Creative Writing ranked in the Top 25 in the UK in recent league tables. To find out more about studying English at Northumbria go to: www.northumbria.ac.uk/humanities or sign up for one of our upcoming Open Days by clicking here.

For more information about English: Shared Futures go to: <http://www.englishsharedfutures.uk/>

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk

07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk

07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk

07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk