



# Spring 2024



## **ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS**

- New series of Inaugural Professorial Lectures
- Latest staff publications
- Funding successes, awards, and fellowships
- Research networking
- Impact activities and public engagement
- Conference papers and presentations
- Recent PhDs
- Upcoming research events in the School

#### Welcome, RESOEARCHERs!

The results from REF 2021 provide an indicative demonstration of the strength of research and impact activity in our School:

- In the overall quality profile (composed from outputs, impact, and environment), we achieved the highest percentage of 4-star quality attainment of any Unit of Assessment/School in the University of Leeds.
- Of our research outputs, 92% were judged to be 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent'.

Building on these successes, and as part of our continuing programme of developing support for research and impact, this first issue of the bi-annual research newsletter provides a snapshot of some of the many recent and forthcoming achievements, activities, and events from across the School.

The newsletter not only aims to share information about the School's active research culture between our colleagues and students, but invites audiences across the Faculty, University and beyond to learn more about our rich intellectual community and to participate in a range of forthcoming events.

To contribute stories to the autumn issue of RESOEARCHER, email Matt Woodcock, Research & Impact Support Officer



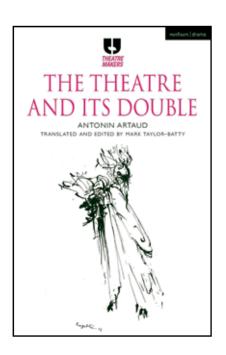
# INAUGURAL LECTURES RETURN

## Pinter, Pensions, Artaud, and the Absurd

This semester the School relaunched its series of inaugural professorial lectures, beginning in fine style with Professor of Theatre and Performance **Mark Taylor-Batty**'s lecture 'Pinter, Pensions, Artaud, and the Absurd', on 23 February.

From Harold Pinter's forensic analyses of the strata of political power to Antonin Artaud's appeal to erase all of culture and start anew with theatre as the catalyst, the lecture surveyed aspects of Mark's scholarly output (with a nod to his work as a pensions negotiator), linked by a focus on how these artists have foregrounded, critiqued and challenged cultural orthodoxies and structured social narratives.

The lecture coincided with the launch of Mark's edition of Artaud's *The Theatre* and *Its Double*, the first new translation into English of this canonical text in over 50 years.





## **Words Change States: The Public Poet**

On 2 May, Professor of Poetry **Kimberly Campanello** gave her inaugural lecture-performance, 'Words Change States: The Public Poet'.

The event was introduced by UK Poet Laureate Professor Simon Armitage (University of Leeds) and Dr Adam Hanna (University College Cork), and hosted jointly by the School of English, the University of Leeds Poetry Centre, and the National Poetry Centre.

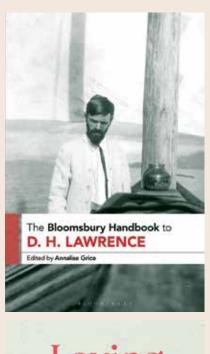
Kimberly's lecture was accompanied by an exhibition of her poetry-object MOTHERBABYHOME in the Brotherton Gallery curated by Prof. Fiona Becket (University of Leeds).

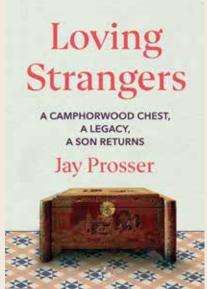
Drawing upon her engagement with visionary poetics from the medieval period to the present, Kimberly articulated the many ways poets address and challenge the public and language itself. She performed from significant examples of her work, including 'Moving Nowhere Here', her long poem about her experience of Young Onset Parkinson's, MOTHERBABYHOME about the St Mary's Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, Co. Galway, and work-in-progress that engages with Dante, dialect, translation, and her Italian American background in Elkhart, Indiana.

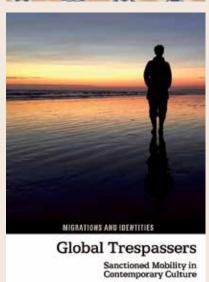
Words do this. Words change states. Words make things happen. Words make things happen always, or as long as a word like always can be made to last. Which is forever."

Across all her writing, Kimberly's abiding preoccupation is with the power of language to 'change states' in all senses of the phrase – changing our understandings of the law and the State, changing our emotional-physical-spiritual-intellectual states, and changing its own state as each word shifts and morphs with every use and encounter.

Video recordings of inaugural lectures can be found on the Leeds Arts & Humanities Research Institute (LAHRI) website.







## LATEST STAFF PUBLICATIONS

## **Transformations and Transplantations**

**Fiona Becket**'s chapter on 'Sustainability and Balance' for *The Bloomsbury Hand-book to D. H. Lawrence*, edited by Annalise Grice, was published in January 2024.

**Bridget Bennett** submitted the manuscript of her monograph *Antislavery in the Dissenting Atlantic: Archives and Unquiet Libraries, 1776–1865*, to appear in Louisiana State University's longstanding series 'Antislavery, Abolition and the Atlantic World'. Research for the book was enabled by a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship.

**Ben Dunn** contributed two essays to *Pandemic Culture: The Impacts of COVID-19 on the UK Cultural Sector and Implications for the Future*, edited by Abigail Gilmore, Dave O'Brien and Ben Walmsley, published by Manchester University Press in June.

**Sam Durrant**'s article 'Homo Ecologicus: Animism, Historical Materialism and Planetary Mimesis' was published in a special issue of *Modern Language Notes* on 'The Mimetic Turn', edited by Nidesh Lawtoo, 138 (2023): 1-25.

**Brett Greatley-Hirsch**'s article on *Epicene* was published in *The Ben Jonson Journal*, 31 (2024): 94–103, inspired by work with Playhouse Lab. A co-authored article on *Dick of Devonshire* also recently appeared in *Studies in Philology* 121 (2024): 163–87.

**Graham Huggan**'s co-authored article on European national parks was published in *Environmental Humanities*; another, on British whaling literature, will appear in *PMLA*. Two guest-edited special issues on environmental themes are forthcoming later this semester: one on conservation humanities for *Humanities*, another on extinction across the disciplines for *Cambridge Prisms: Extinction*.

**Anna McFarlane** has submitted the manuscript for *The Edinburgh Companion to Science Fiction and the Medical Humanities* to Edinburgh University Press, co-edited with Gavin Miller and Donna McCormack.

**John McLeod**'s latest book, *Global Trespassers: Sanctioned Mobility in Contemporary Culture*, will be published in June by Liverpool University Press.

**Jay Prosser**'s new book, *Loving Strangers: A Camphorwood Chest*, a *Legacy*, a *Son Returns*, will also be published in June.

**Jess Richards** recently published an essay, 'Writing and drawing "The Three Dresses" (Creative Practice as Research)', and short story, 'The Three Dresses', in a special issue of *Marvels and Tales* 37 (2023).

**Caitlin Stobie** recently published a short story in *Wasafiri*. Her collaborative short story collection written with Kharys Ateh Laue, entitled *The Smell of Blood and Other Stories*, is forthcoming with Karavan Press later in 2024.

**Alex Thom**'s first book, *Office and Duty in King Lear: Shakespeare's Political Theologies* (2024), was recently published as part of the Palgrave Shakespeare Studies series.

**Emma Trott**'s chapter, 'A Change of Heart: Animality, Power, and Black Posthuman Enhancement in Malorie Blackman's *Pig-Heart Boy*' was published in *Animals and Science Fiction*, edited by Nora Castle and Giulia Champion (Palgrave, 2024).

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### **FELLOWSHIPS**

**Amelia DeFalco** has been a Jarislowsky Fellow at the University of Waterloo, Canada, this semester.

**Brett Greatley-Hirsch** was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in February.

**Anna McFarlane** has been engaging with the Wellcome-funded *Future of Human Reproduction* project at the University of Lancaster as a Visiting Collaborator. As part of this project, she has delivered a seminar to the University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) and led a reading session.

**Brendon Nicholls** secured a six-month residential Fellowship (from January–June 2025) at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (University of Stellenbosch) to work on a book project called *South African Literature: Global Challenges, New Humanities.* 

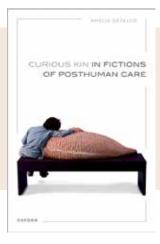
## **FUNDING SUCCESSES**

## **Digital humanities and computational linguistics**

**Brett Greatley-Hirsch** was awarded a BA Mid-Career Fellowship for his project 'Reproducing Renaissance Drama' (£145,280), a computational study of the editing and publishing of Renaissance plays from the eighteenth century to the present day, which will begin in 2025. Brett has also secured support from the Faculty's International Academic Mobility Fund to explore potential research and training partnerships with colleagues at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, in May–June.

**Alison May** recently secured the latest of a series of research grants that have amounted to a total of over £400,000 since 2022 for projects focusing on computational linguistics and language learning (CLLL) with a particular emphasis on error analysis to improve advanced learner proficiency in Mandarin and Russian. The projects involve PG research assistants and Co-Is from across the AHC faculty. The Co-Is are Prof. Binhua Wang (Translation Studies, Chinese); Dr Callum Walker (Translation Studies, Russian); and Dr James Wilson (Russian).



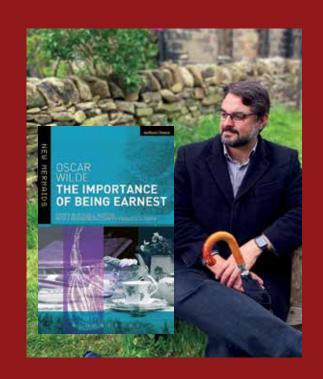


### PRIZES

**Amelia DeFalco**'s book, *Curious Kin in Fictions of Posthuman Care*, won the 2024 British Society for Literature and Science (BSLS) Book Prize.

**Alison May** was awarded the Germanic Society of Forensic Linguistics' Achievement Award for her contributions to the field of forensic linguistics in September 2023.

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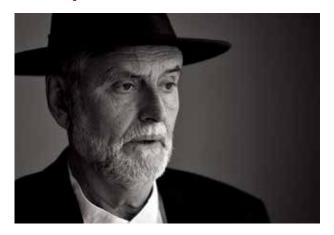


## RESEARCH NETWORKING

- Kimberly Campanello has been invited to join the Board of Trustees for Ledbury Poetry.
- Jeremy Davies is running an AHRC Research Network from January to October this year, called 'Interdisciplinary Dialogues in Industry and Literature, 1770–1830'.
- José A. Pérez Díez has been appointed as a General Editor of the New Mermaids. This much-loved series, now 130 years old, is published by Bloomsbury and offers rigorous critical editions of drama, medieval to modern, especially targeted at students and theatre practitioners.
- Jane Rickard has been elected to the Council of the Society for Renaissance Studies.

## CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

## Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice



Organised by **Jane Rickard** and **Brett Greatley-Hirsch** under the auspices of the School of English's **Playhouse Lab**, a symposium, *The Merchant of Venice: Sources, Intertexts, Afterlives*, 9–10 February, brought together academics, students, and members of the general public, to explore new perspectives on one of Shakespeare's most culturally significant plays. The event included a sold-out performance of Gareth Armstrong's acclaimed one-man show, *Shylock*, told from the perspective of the minor character Tubal, Shylock's 'only friend', in the Workshop Theatre.

## **Machine Learning and DH Sandpit**



The N8 CIR Machine Learning and Humanities Sandpit, organised by **Mel Evans** and attended by colleagues from School of English, took place on Friday 19 April to help build networks across these rapidly developing research areas at Leeds and with universities as part of the N8 network. The event was well attended, with lots of productive conversations; future events are anticipated for the summer and autumn.



#### **Coercive Control**

**Katy Mullin** recently co-organised a two-day conference at the University of York on *Narratives of Coercive Control*. The conference is connected to the AHRC research networking project on which she is Co-I with Hannah Roche (University of York)



## **Disability Futures**

The main conference event of the fiveyear *Imagining Technologies for Disability Futures* (itDf) project, led by **Stuart Murray**, was held in Leeds on April 25– 26. The project, now in its final year, is a collaboration between the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, Exeter, and Dundee and is funded by the Wellcome Trust. The conference brought together scholars, designers, product developers, creative practitioners, disability activists and research facilitators from Canada, the US, Argentina, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK.

It is the second event in an innovative 'Pathway to Publication' route to develop a special issue of *BMJ: Medical Humanities* that will appear at the end of this year. Leeds-based film company Adarak produced a film across the event, focused on the project's exploration of disability and technology, that will appear on University and *BMJ* websites.

## **IMPACT ACTIVITIES**

**Julia Snell** has been invited to serve as Expert Advisor on an independent *Commission on the Future of Oracy Education in England*, from March to September this year, drawing on her research on children's language in education that potentially forms the basis for one of the School's impact case studies.

The *Dialect and Heritage Project* led by **Fiona Douglas** and project managed by **Kathleen McGrath**, which aims to underpin one of the School's impact case studies, is now confirmed as one of the attractions at *Be Curious* on Saturday 18 May. One of the project partners in the case study, North Yorkshire Libraries, has been shortlisted in the Libraries Connected – Culture and Creativity Award for their *Ey Up! Project*. They will find out if they have been successful at this year's annual conference on 4–5 June.



### PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED PAPERS

**Bridget Bennett** recently convened two conference panels, on which she also gave papers, at the British Association for Nineteenth-Century Americanists (BrANCA) conference in Bristol and Society for Nineteenth-Century Americanists (C19) conference in Pasadena. She also gave talks at the A19 seminars series organised by the Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Cultures Anglophones (LARCA) in Paris and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) network conference 'Voices and Agencies' in Essen.

**Kimberly Campanello** is giving a reading with Clare Fisher for the journal *Tolka*, based on her forthcoming essay, at Leeds Lit Fest on 18 June. Kimberly is also presenting a paper "They Said Grave Words about My Future Life": Translating Dante's *Commedia* in "Crip Time" at the American Association of Italian Studies conference held 6–9 June in Sorrento.

J.R. Carpenter will be reading from her recent collection The Pleasure of the Coast (Pamenar Press) at an evening of Canadian experimental poetry hosted by More Song and sponsored by University of Leeds Poetry Centre at Hyde Park Book Club on 26 May. On 30 May, J.R. will perform her new browser-based work An Island of Sound in collaboration with musician Jules Rawlinson at the John Hansard Gallery, Southampton, as part of the AHRC-funded project Weather Reports – Wind as Model, Media, and Experience.

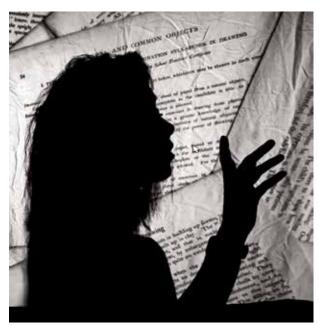
In January 2024, **Sam Durrant** gave a keynote for an online conference on *Trauma and Memory Studies: Responses from the Global South* at Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi. The paper was entitled 'Whose Memory is it Anyway? Animism, Literature and the Disenclosure of Memory/Trauma Studies'. In June this year he will give an invited paper, 'Reading refugees: Beyond Hospitality', for a colloquium on *Nouveaux Horizons de l'Hospitalité* at the University of Toulouse.

**Mel Evans** will be giving a keynote/public lecture in Canterbury in July as part of the *Aphra Behn Festival* on 'Aphra Behn's spying letters'.

Brett Greatley-Hirsch will deliver a keynote, 'What Can Computers Tell Us About Shakespeare's Dramatic Genres?' at the University of Calabria's *William Shakespeare and Early Modern Literatures* conference, sponsored by the Associazone Italiana di Anglistica in May. He is also a keynote speaker at the Hong Kong Association for Educational Communications and Technologies International Conference in June.

**Christiana Gregoriou** will deliver a keynote at İstanbul Kültür University's *ViaTalks* 2024 Conference (7-8 May). The conference is on 'Crime Scene: Narratives of Crime and Criminal Psychology', and her keynote is on 'Crime fictional mind styles'.

**Alison May** was an invited speaker at the *World Police Summit* at the World Trade Centre, Dubai held 5-7 March.



In April, **John McLeod** participated in the biennial conference of the Alliance for Study of Adoption and Culture (ASAC) at Brown University, USA, where he introduced and engaged with the writer Lemn Sissay at a number of keynote events. In June, John will be delivering a keynote address, 'Sanctioned Migration and the Figure of the Trespasser', at an international conference, *Moving Cultures, Moving Ethnicities*, at the University of Eastern Finland.

Anna McFarlane is an invited speaker at *The Persistence of the Short Story: Traditions and Futures* conference to be held at Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, in July. She is also presenting the keynote at the University of Lancaster Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences conference in May.

**Stuart Murray** was invited to speak at Heinrich Heine University in Dusseldorf on 8 March on the topic of 'What are the Medical Humanities: Current Trends and Future Developments', specifically about Medical Humanities research.

**Caitlin Stobie** will be delivering a keynote address at the University of York's upcoming symposium on *Reproductive Justice and the Humanities*.

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## The Play's the Thing

Most Renaissance plays were not written to be *read*, but rather to be *performed*. Yet the vast majority of the drama from this time – the 'Golden Age' of English literature – has not been revived on stage for over 400 years, leaving scholars and students alike to rely on the documentary evidence of the scripts alone. Exclusive reliance on play-texts over other forms of evidence gives rise to an unrealistic view of what the theatre in Shakespeare's time was like: words on a page do not make a play. Actors do.

Playhouse Lab was created to fill in these knowledge gaps, using our understanding of original acting practices and the material conditions of the early modern theatre to mount performances that creatively reconstruct and critically explore how Renaissance plays may have worked on stage. Better understanding early modern plays as performance texts is a key component of research in several disciplines, including literary criticism, performance studies, theatre history, and scholarly editing. Such understanding is also vital to the undergraduate and postgraduate study of early modern drama, but students typically have few opportunities for practical exploration of the plays that they read.

Through diverse forms of research activity, Playhouse Lab addresses these challenges, involving academic staff and students, and supported by theatre technicians. Playhouse Lab provides staged readings of rarely performed plays, expanding knowledge of the breadth and variety of the theatrical culture. Playhouse Lab works with editors of early modern plays to 'road test' editions-in-progress, exploring textual cruces, difficult staging, and stage directions. Playhouse Lab supports researchers, including PGRs, in leading workshops on particular scenes or topics, enabling the exploration of specific research questions. Playhouse Lab also runs training sessions in which students and others learn about performance conditions through practical exercises.











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Founded by **José A. Pérez Díez** in 2016, Playhouse Lab is now co-convened by **Jane Rickard**, with additional logistical support from **Brett Greatley-Hirsch**. Playhouse Lab also boasts a core group of members and attracts new participants, including students, each academic year. Sessions typically have 10–40 participants and audiences of up to 80.

Playhouse Lab plays a major role in the School's leading research in textual editing and scholarship. Its activities have informed and enhanced editions of early modern plays produced for the Oxford Complete Works of John Marston, the New Cambridge Shakespeare, the Revels Plays, the Oxford Collected Works of James Shirley, and Digital Renaissance Editions. They have fed into studies of particular dramatists, such as Jane Rickard's current book project on Ben Jonson and the Construction of the Reader, and led to the production of articles, such as one on Epicene by Brett Greatley-Hirsch, recently published in The Ben Jonson Journal (2024). They have also informed doctoral research; for example, PGR Sam Jermy's thesis on 'Thomas Middleton, masculinities, and embodiment' (submitted 2022).

Playhouse Lab also has a considerable impact on taught student education in the School of English. Performances are embedded into the School's research-led teaching, supplementing several undergraduate and graduate modules. Students have the opportunity to watch the plays that they are studying in performance, to participate in critical and scholarly discussion with peers and experts, and to gain performance experience themselves. Students thus become researchers, learning through practice, experimentation, and collaboration, and contributing to the development of published research. Playhouse Lab also raises the profile of early modern studies at Leeds. Public engagement and impact activities include contributing workshops to events such as the Ilkley Literature Festival and Leeds Teachers' Conference. These activities build connections with the local community and support student recruitment. Playhouse Lab convenes and co-hosts academic symposia, thereby providing a venue to showcase at Leeds and to foster connections with other scholars of early modern drama. Our most recent two-day conference on The Merchant of Venice (2024), supported by the School of English and the British Shakespeare Association, featured speakers and delegates from all over the UK.

Over and beyond these different areas of activity, the key benefit of Playhouse Lab is its creation of a strong research community, based on collaboration and mutual support.



## COMING UP IN THE SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

#### **BROADLANDS BOOK LAUNCH**

Wednesday 8 May at 19:00

**Matt Howard**'s poetry collection *Broadlands* will be launched in the Workshop Theatre. See Eventbrite for tickets.

#### **HELIX WORKSHOP ON LETTERPRESS PRINTING**

Thursday 9 May from 12:00-13:00

In collaboration with HELIX, **James Mussell** and **Brett Greatley-Hirsch** are offering a letterpress workshop using the School of English Print Rooms. Tickets are available free from Eventbrite but spots are strictly limited.

#### PLAYHOUSE LAB: SHAKESPEARE'S RICHARD II

Thursday 9 May from 17:30~21:00

Playhouse Lab's annual semi-rehearsed reading will take place in the Workshop Theatre. See the Playhouse Lab website for details.

#### PRACTICE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Friday 17 May from 10:00-17:00

Not Knowing, Apparently Doing Nothing, How It's Made: Articulating Practice Research Methodologies, organised by Caitlin Stobie and Kimberly Campanello, will take place in the Edward Boyle Library Conference Room and Online. The first practice research symposium in the School, the event focuses on the 'how' of creative practice research and will feature presentations (in the broadest sense of the word) from colleagues and PGRs in the School engaged in creative practice research.

#### **CRITICAL LIFE RESEARCH MASTERCLASS**

'Reading and Contesting Bruno Latour'

Thursday 23 May from 14:30-16:00

The School of English Critical Life Research Group and The School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies warmly invite you to come and reflect on the relationship between life, modernity and the political, particularly but not exclusively in the wake of the COVID pandemic, in the company of Prof. Frederica Pedriali (University of Edinburgh). The masterclass will take place in the School of English Meeting Room, G.01.

#### **CRITICAL LIFE RESEARCH TALK**

Thursday 23 May from 16:30-18:00

Sponsored by the School of English Critical Life Research Group and The School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, Prof. Frederica Pedriali (University of Edinburgh) will offer a research talk on 'We the Moderns Live: Contesting Bruno Latour with Davide Tarizzo'. The talk will be held in the School of English Seminar Room 5 (first floor).



#### **AFRICA WEEK**

20-25 May

The University of Leeds Africa Week will run from 20–25 May and its academic programme is being led by Kendi Guantai (Dean of EDI), **Brendon Nicholls** (English and Director of LUCAS) and Anna Mdee (POLIS). Africa Week aims to celebrate Africa in its promise, diversity, capacities, and excellence. It will include panels on Global Higher Education Systems, Research Partnerships and Collaboration, Women in Leadership, African Feminisms in Higher Education, Community Education and Indigenous Knowledges, Decoloniality and Transformation, Student Perspectives, Policy for Progress, Reframing Excellence. Africa Week will gather community across perspectives, invite imagination and reflection, prompt new conversations, and build lasting relationships.



## **EVENTS CONTINUED**

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES RESEARCH GROUP**

Tuesday 4 June at 17:30

Novelist and writer Daisy Hildyard will be visiting the School of English for a reading and conversation, hosted by the Environmental Humanities Research Group. The event will be held in the Alumni Room (first floor).

#### **WORLD ENGLISHES, CAPITALISM, & COLONIALISM**

Tuesday 11 June from 15:00-18:00

Kate Spowage will be launching her new monograph, Language as Statecraft: 'Global English' and the Politics of Language in Rwanda, as part of two events taking place in the School of English centred on World Englishes, Capitalism, and Colonialism: Prof. John P. Regan (UCL) will be speaking on 'Material Considerations for a World Englishes that is Critically Applied' from 15:00–16:30 in the Alumni Room. The launch for Kate's book will then take place from 16:30–18:00 in the School Foyer.

#### ANNUAL MA STUDENT CONFERENCE

Tuesday 18 June

Come hear our current MA students present their in-progress research. Further details to follow.

#### **IMPACT CASE STUDY WRITING WORKSHOP**

Thursday 20 June from 12:00-14:00

For all colleagues currently involved in drafting their impact case study templates, a group workshop will be held in the Alumni Room. Further details to follow.

#### **MIDSUMMER MUSE POETRY SHOWCASE**

Thursday 20 June from 19:00-21:00

The Poetry Centre's contribution to Leeds Lit Fest 2024 will take place in the School of English. Further details to follow.

#### **BOOK LAUNCH: JAY PROSSER & JESS RICHARDS**

Wednesday 26 June at 16:30

We have a joint launch for new publications by **Jay Prosser** and **Jess Richards** planned for this date and time. Further details to follow.

#### **EPHEMERAL MODERNISMS: BAMS CONFERENCE**

Thursday 27 to Saturday 29 June

**Tracy Hargreaves** and **Wei Zhou** are co-organising this conference in collaboration with the British Association for Modernist Studies (BAMS) committee. The conference will take place in the School and other venues on campus.

# REGULAR RESEARCH EVENTS

In addition to the individual events listed above, we have the ongoing **Overcoming Obstacles to Research** workshop series (run by **Christiana Gregoriou**) taking place through May and June, the **New Inklings** research conversations (run up by **Brett Great-ley-Hirsch** and **Danielle Williams**), and the **Research M[]tters** seminar series (convened by **Brett Greatley-Hirsch**). The 2024–25 focus for **Research M[]tters** will be **New Directions**.



There is a lot taking place in the School of English, but you can always keep track of forthcoming events on our **website**.

The next issue of RESOEARCHER will be circulated in the autumn semester. A call for contributions will be announced later in the calendar year.

Matt Woodcock, Research & Impact Support Officer m.woodcock@leeds.ac.uk