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## **National Poetry Day announces new book trade promotion for 2019 and list of 35 recommended poetry books**

As part of the celebrations for National Poetry Day 2019 on 3 October, the Forward Arts Foundation, supported by Gardners and Browns Books for Students, has put together four reading lists of poetry to read and share on National Poetry Day and every day.

National Poetry Day is the UK's largest celebration of poetry and generates more poetry sales even than Valentine's Day. Many hundreds of thousands of people will be reading and sharing favourite poetry on the day in bookshops, schools, libraries, pubs, theatres and businesses, or simply via their own social media accounts.

Poetry continues to enjoy a huge boom in sales. In figures collated for Forward Arts Foundation, Nielsen BookScan recently announced that poetry sales have increased by almost 50% in five years, reaching an all-time high of £12.3 million in 2018. Analysis of the poetry book buying audience showed that two thirds of poetry book buyers are under the age of 34.

This year's four Recommended National Poetry Day Reads lists are: [New Books](#), [Books for You and Your Reading Group](#), [Books for Children](#) and [Books For Young People](#). The YA list is a new addition for this year's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Poetry Day, reflecting the range and interest in poetry for the YA market.

The campaign is supported by more than 20 publishers, from Penguin Random House, Macmillan and Faber to independents Carcanet, Bloodaxe Books, Seren and Pinned in the Margins.

Andrea Reece, National Poetry Day Manager comments, "This is the third year we have created recommended reading lists for National Poetry Day. These lists show the extraordinary breadth and wealth of poetry at the moment, and it's no wonder that sales of poetry books are booming. We are hugely grateful to our sponsors Gardners and Browns Books for Students and to all the publishers for their support."

Michael Schmidt, founder and director of Carcanet Press said, "For fifty years Carcanet has been publishing books for readers. National Poetry Day is an ideal opportunity to find more readers for our poets: a part of the Jubilee celebration. Like opera and ballet, sculpture and painting, poetry creates a space into which readers

can extend and grow their experience of language first, its meanings and its sounds, its disclosures and withholdings, and then of the world in which it moves. Readers, shaping the words in their minds or with their lips, bring the poems uniquely alive. National Poetry Day for us is a chance to celebrate the poem and the person who completes its creation, the reader.”

The lists feature a wide-range of new poetry books, collections and anthologies to suit everyone.

The New Poetry Books list includes *Deaf Republic* by Ilya Kaminsky, *Surge* by Jay Bernard and *If All The World and Love Were Young* by Stephen Sexton, all shortlisted for the Forward Prize for Poetry, as well as Kei Miller’s highly anticipated new collection *In Nearby Bushes*.

National Poetry Day’s poetry recommendations for book groups features *Up in the Attic* by the nation’s favourite Pam Ayres alongside Denise Riley’s *Selected Poems* and *Eternity* by Tracy K. Smith. Special readers’ notes have been commissioned for each of the books on the list, and the selection is being promoted via the Reading Agency and their Reading Groups for Everyone network.

The list of books selected for sharing with children includes new collections by National Poetry Day ambassadors Brian Moses and James Carter, and Liz Brownlee, Roger Stevens and Matt Goodfellow, as well as Allie Esiri’s *Shakespeare for Every Day of the Year*, the family must-have for 2019.

Poets Matt Abbott, Dean Atta, Sarah Crossan, Nikita Gill and Sophia Thakur make up the new list for young people with straight to the heart collections guaranteed to connect with readers.

Display packs featuring designs by National Poetry Day 2019 artist Chie Hosaka and including sets of collectable bookmarks have been sent to schools, bookshops and libraries across the UK with the support of Gardners and Browns Books for Students.

Nigel Wyman, Head of Business Development at Gardners comments, “Gardners is delighted to be a key sponsor of this year’s National Poetry Day and to be working alongside the team at the Forward Arts Foundation. We are noticing upwards sales trends and enjoy seeing the innovative ways in which it is delivered. Our partnership is geared towards generating awareness and growing the reach of this important genre.”

Simon Hicks, Sales and Marketing Manager from Seren Books comments, “Today’s poetry scene is booming, celebrated in print, broadcast and social media. We can agree with Robert Graves that there’s no poetry in money, but for writers, publishers and booksellers, there needs to be at least a little money in poetry. That’s why National Poetry Day’s trade campaigns are so welcome and so vital. Sure, NPD has dazzling events, glitzy awards, fabulous publications – but it doesn’t neglect the business end. With verve, innovation and style, National Poetry Day fashions links between author, publisher, bookshop and reader, giving poetry space in a crowded cultural marketplace. In over half a century of poetry publishing, Seren has seen a lot

of initiatives. Few have matched the impact of National Poetry Day, a key date in our calendar.”

Hive.co.uk, the online network of independent bookstores is supporting the NPD Recommended Reads 2019 [www.hive.co.uk/Books/national-poetry-day](http://www.hive.co.uk/Books/national-poetry-day)

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Notes for editors:

#### 1. NPD Recommended Reading Lists 2019-08-15

##### New Books

**If All the World and Love were Young** by Stephen Sexton (*Penguin Press*, £9.99)

**Unknown Solider** by Seni Seneviratne (*Peepal Tree Press*, £9.99)

**Rock, Paper Scissors** by Richard Osmond (*Picador*, £10.99)

**The Tradition** by Jericho Brown (*Picador*, £10.99)

**The Carrying** by Ada Limon (*Corsair*, £10.99)

**Deaf Republic** by Ilya Kaminsky (*Faber*, £11.99)

**After the Formalities** by Anthony Anaxagorou (*Penned in the Margins*, £xxx)

**In Nearby Bushes** by Kei Miller (*Carcanet*, £9.99)

**If They Come for Us** by Fatimah Asghar (*Corsair*, £10.99)

##### Books for You and Your Reading Group

**The Poetry Pharmacy Returns** by William Sieghart (*Penguin Press*, £xxx)

**Eternity** by Tracey K Smith (*Penguin Press*, £11)

**Counting Backwards** by Helen Dunmore (*Bloodaxe*, £14.99)

**Tell Me the Truth About Life** edited by Cerys Matthews (*Michael O'Mara*, £12.99)

**Forward Book of Poetry 2020** by various (*Forward Arts Foundation*, £9.99)

**Afternoons Go Nowhere** by Sheenagh Pugh (*Seren*, £9.99)

**Gen** by Jonathan Edwards (*Seren*, £9.99)

**Up in the Attic** by Pam Ayres (*Ebury*, £18.99)

**Selected Poems** by Denise Riley (*Picador*, £14.99)

**Discipline** by Jane Yeh (*Carcanet*, £9.99)

### Books for Young People

**Toffee** by Sarah Crossan (*Bloomsbury YA*, £12.99)

**A Hurricane in My Head** by Matt Abbott (*Bloomsbury Education*, £5.99)

**The Black Flamingo** by Dean Atta (*Hodder Children's Books*, £12.99)

**Great Goddesses** by Nikita Gill (*Ebury*, £12.99)

**Somebody Give This Heart a Pen** by Sophia Thakur (*Walker Books*, £7.99)

### Books for Children

**Poems Out Loud** by Rhiannon Findlay (*Ladybird*, £7.99)

**Midnight Feasts: Tasty Poems** collected by AF Harrold (*Bloomsbury Education*, £12.99)

**Perfectly Peculiar Pets** by Elli Woollard (*Bloomsbury Education*, £5.99)

**Spaced Out: Space Poems** by Brian Moses and James Carter (*Bloomsbury Education*, £6.99)

**Cherry Moon** by Zaro Weil (*Troika Books*, £14.00)

**Be the Change** by Brownlee, Stevens, Goodfellow (*Macmillan Children's Books*, £5.99)

**Shakespeare for Everyday of the Year** by Allie Esiri (*Macmillan Children's Books*, £18.99)

**Poems to Fall in Love With** by Chris Riddell (*Macmillan Children's Books*, £12.99)

**Moonstruck** by Roger Stevens (*Otter-Barry Books*, £6.99)

**What is the Truth** by Ted Hughes (*Faber*, £10)

## **2. National Poetry Day and Forwards Arts Foundation**

Forward Arts Foundation is a registered charity in England and Wales (charity number 1037939), promoting public knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of poetry in the UK and Ireland. It is committed to widening poetry's audience, honouring achievement and supporting talent: programmes include National Poetry Day, the Forward Prizes for Poetry and the Forward Book of Poetry, an annual anthology of the year's best poems. For more information, visit: <http://www.forwardartsfoundation.org/>

National Poetry Day is the annual celebration that inspires people throughout the UK to enjoy, discover and share poems. Everyone is invited to join in, whether by organising events, displays, competitions or by simply posting favourite lines of poetry on social media using :

#nationalpoetryday.

National Poetry Day was founded in 1994 and enjoys the support of the BBC, Arts Council England, the Royal Mail and leading literary and cultural organisations. The 2019 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary Truth campaign is supported by UK book trade wholesaler Gardners and leading education supplier Browns Books for Students. For more information visit: <https://nationalpoetryday.co.uk/>